

Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

Vol. 33, Issue 7
JULY/AUGUST 2025



Muckraker

Journalism overcomes traffic
to win 150th Preakness Stakes



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Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

— Set List —

Journalism writes a Preakness thriller

Two weeks after finishing second to Sovereignty in the Kentucky Derby, Journalism overcomes traffic to rally in the stretch and win the 150th Preakness Stakes on a historic day at Baltimore's Pimlico Race Course. By Joe Clancy. Page 28

Margie's Intention shines in Black-Eyed Susan

In her first start for new majority owner WinStar Farm and trainer Brad Cox, Margie's Intention handles the mud and her foes to win the Black-Eyed Susan on a day that included a stakes win by Maryland-bred Bosserati. By Tom Law. Page 36

Sun shines on Preakness undercard

With a stakes double, trainer Steve Asmussen compares the finality of Pimlico's scheduled rebuild to the waning days of Hollywood Park. Pennsylvania-bred Witty rules Jim McKay. By Tom Law. Page 42

Long day, week at Timonium

Fasig-Tipton Midatlantic weathers storms, literal and figurative, but gets rewarded by record-setting juvenile sale. By Joe Clancy. Page 48

Telling the Thoroughbred tale matters

The important work of chronicling achievements beyond the racetrack. By Kristen Kovatch Bentley. Page 58

Steeplechase Times: Abaan denies Snap Decision

Three weeks after losing while in receipt of 18 pounds at Middleburg, Abaan carries level weights and upsets champion Snap Decision in the Iroquois. By Joe Clancy. Page 60

On our cover: Hemmed in between horses late, Journalism gets set to launch his winning rally in the 150th Preakness Stakes.

Photo by Eclipse Sportswire

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*Only Pimlico can save
the Triple Crown*

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August 16 - Colonial Downs

\$125,000 ALL BRANDY 3YO & Up, Fillies and Mares,
1 $\frac{1}{16}$ miles, Turf

\$125,000 FIND 3YO & Up, 1 $\frac{1}{16}$ miles, Turf

August 23 - Colonial Downs

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Bonuses will be awarded based on a four-tiered system that assigns points based on Maryland purse equivalents. See Mdhorsemen.com for a point system chart.

Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred

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1933
Lead Play
1934
High Quest

1935
Omaha
26
ture

1937
War Admiral
1938
Dauber

1939
Chalcedon
1940
Rich

Post Time

OLD HILLTOP. Decked out in its historic finery one last time, Baltimore's Pimlico Race Course hosted fans – who turned out in spite of the weather – for morning training sessions and tours during Preakness week.

Scott Serio / Eclipse Sportswire







Post Time

SINGLE TRACK. A lone galloper makes use of a sloppy Pimlico Race Course track during Preakness week. Demolition and a rebuild of the historic track was slated to begin in July, meaning the 2026 Preakness Stakes will be at Laurel Park.

Scott Serio / Eclipse Sportswire

— The Starting Gate —

Say It Again

“Nobody can understand me anyway, so . . .”

Trainer Arnaud Delacour, on trying not to mess up a television interview at Pimlico

“I do love your state, but it may be a bit bipolar.”

*Thoroughbred Aftercare Alliance’s Stacie Clark Rogers,
on the wild weather at Pimlico on Black-Eyed Susan Day*

“I’m a horse trainer, I can’t afford front-row tickets like this.”

*Winning trainer Michael McCarthy, stopping to watch
the T-Pain concert after the Preakness press conference*

“I knew I was running him too short.”

*Mike Trombetta, who trained Maryland Hunt Cup
winner Road to Oz before he became a steeplechaser*

“I just told Cherie we’re going to buy a house in Baltimore.”

*David Ingordo after Retribution completed a two-win day for his wife, trainer Cherie
DeVaux May 17; her career mark at Old Hilltop includes five wins in seven starts.*

“I’ve bought a lot of horses I liked that didn’t turn out too.”

*Trainer Ed Moger Jr., on purchasing graded stakes winner
Charlene’s Dream for \$35,000 at Timonium in 2023*

“I didn’t even like that horse.”

Underbidder on a nearly seven-figure 2-year-old at the Timonium sale May 20

“I’m going to put my miner hat on to look at this horse.”

Ingordo, on a late-night inspection at the Timonium sale

“Oh brother, we’re here for a long time.”

Northview Stallion Station’s Paul O’Loughlin, early on at the sale

“I’m not much of a fighter, but I can take a punch.”

Fasig-Tipton’s Boyd Browning, on life as a sales-company CEO



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— The Starting Gate —

Go Figure

74 Minutes of post time delay, thanks to a thunderstorm and tornado warning, for the Black-Eyed Susan Stakes – run at 6:58 p.m. instead of 5:44 – at Pimlico May 16. The storm also canceled the day's 14th race.

6:17 Hours and minutes between potential starters for trainer Lizzie Merryman on Black-Eyed Susan Day. She entered horses in the second race (12:06 p.m. off time) and 14th race (post time 6:23). Of course, to make matters worse, the 14th race was canceled due to a thunderstorm.

1 Guy chasing a wind-blown hat on the Pimlico dirt track before the Gallorette Stakes May 17.

7 States represented on the breeding lines of winners over the May 16 and 17 cards at Pimlico. Winners were foaled in Kentucky, Maryland, Pennsylvania, Texas, Minnesota and Louisiana – and Mississippi counting the Arabian race.

2 Mammals (a bulldog and a man) sleeping in the Timonium sales pavilion at 8:01 May 20.

23 People (and one dog) in the seating area of the Timonium pavilion as Hip 577 sold at 9:50 p.m. May 20.

1 Person watching the NHL playoffs on a computer in the final stages of the May sale (the Panthers won the first game of the conference finals 5-2).

History Lessons

During the rain delay on Black-Eyed Susan Day at Pimlico Race Course, track video monitors showed some highlights of Preaknesses past.

Among the classics were victories by Seattle Slew (1977, pictured), Sunday Silence (1989), Hansel (1991), Red Bullet (2000), Funny Cide (2003), American Pharoah (2015), Justify (2018) and Seize the Grey (2024).



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Hats for Sale

A semi-regular accounting of some of the baseball caps in use at the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic May sale of 2-year-olds (in no particular order): Major Dude, Denver Broncos, a classic Preakness model from the 1980s, Pennsylvania Horse Breeders Association, Country Life Farm, Into Mischief, Little Red Feather racing stable, Delaware Handicap 2009, Not This Time, Ace Impact (world champion 3-year-old), Mohawk, Nike, Adidas, Sentient Jet, Dale Capuano Racing, Golfaholic, Scanlon Training and Sales, Twelve Toes consignment, Margaux Farm, Omaha Beach, Batman, Phillies, Orioles, Yankees.

T-Shirts of the Month

At Timonium's May sale: Where you are in a few months depends on what you do today.

At the Preakness: 2025 – My 53rd consecutive Preakness.

— The Starting Gate —

Calling Home

COLLMUS REFLECTS ON PERSONAL CONNECTION TO PIMLICO

By Ali Çetinok

The final Preakness Stakes at Pimlico Race Course, as the world knows it, offered no shortage of emotion. For Larry Collmus, the Maryland native whose voice has echoed across Triple Crown races and some of the sport's most memorable moments, this 150th Preakness wasn't just another assignment.

It was personal.

The celebrated race caller stood on the rooftop of the Pimlico grandstand – the same rooftop he once looked up at as a teenager with a tape recorder in hand – on Preakness Day May 17 and looked out over a racetrack that shaped his career and identity.

"I was born in Baltimore and grew up in Ellicott City," Collmus said. "My father installed the sound system at the Maryland State Fair in Timonium, so he'd bring me there in the summer to work with him and learn his business. I quickly found out I was mechanically incompetent – and that wasn't what I wanted to do."

What Collmus discovered was a love for the racetrack – its noise, its rhythm, its cast of characters. At Timonium, he was stationed near longtime announcer Dick Woolley. Collmus' job? Monitor the volume of

the loudspeakers. But his heart was tuned to something else.

"I met everyone up there and loved all the characters at the track," he said. "I felt like I fit in. I kind of became the unofficial press box mascot. This was the early 1980s."

By then, he had already developed a fascination with race calling, mimicking the styles of announcers he admired. Clem Florio, the *Washington Post* handicapper known for his sharp wit and sharper eye for talent, gave him a push.

"Why don't you try to do this for real?" Florio asked.

"Well, how do you do that?" Collmus replied.

With help from press box manager Eddie McMullen, Collmus found his first opening. He got a job running errands for McMullen on weekends, brought along binoculars and a tape recorder, found a spot and started calling races. For himself, for practice.

Then fate – and a well-timed overheard call – intervened. Chick Lang, the general manager of Pimlico, heard Collmus practicing one afternoon and asked his son, Chick Jr., who was up there calling.

"That's Larry," Chick Jr. told his father. "He wants to be an announcer."

"Well," came the response, "let's get him started."

The chance came at Bowie in June 1985, the start of the track's final summer meet. Collmus was 18.

"They asked if I wanted to be the backup and call one race a day over the mic," Collmus said. "That's how it started. On June 5, 1985, I called my first official race at Bowie – won by Tiara's Flame, trained by King Leatherbury and ridden by Alberto Delgado. Good Maryland names. That's how it all kicked off."

The Langs remained critical mentors.

"He was everything," Collmus said of the elder Lang. "He was the guy who had faith in this 18-year-old kid. A lot of people would've said I was too young – but Chick gave me that opportunity. He and Chick Jr. were instrumental."

When Chick Jr. moved to Alabama for a management role at the Birmingham Turf Club when it opened in 1987, he brought along Collmus and at age 20 he was a full-fledged track announcer.

But Pimlico was always home.

"Pimlico was always my favorite," he said. "I loved coming here, especially in the spring for the

— The Starting Gate —

Preakness meet. There was so much electricity. Working for Chick and all the Pimlico people – you felt like family.”

As part of his job in the press box, Collmus would watch legendary voice Dave Johnson walk down the hallway past the program-covered walls.

The memory of that hallway came full circle in 2011.

“Fast forward 25 years – I was walking down that same hallway thinking, ‘I’m that guy; I’m going to call the Preakness for NBC,” said Collmus. “It was mind-blowing.”

He still remembers the nickname “Lumpy,” a reference to his childhood physique, bestowed by track veterans who still call him that today. “A lot of familiar faces from the ’80s are still around. It’s great to come home and be part of the final year here. The place may be changing, but we all love it.”

When it comes to favorite early Preakness memory, one race stands out for Collmus: “The first one I went to as a fan – I sat in what we called the old grandstand. Aloma’s Ruler won in 1982.”

But the most unforgettable moments came from champions American Pharoah (in 2015) and Justify three years later.

“The conditions were awful for both,” Collmus said. “For American Pharoah, it looked like a tidal wave had hit the track. For Justify, the fog was so thick I couldn’t see more than 50 yards ahead. I had to call the race off the monitors.



EQUI-PHOTO, INC.

“People ask if I was nervous, but honestly, that was the least nervous I’ve ever been calling a Triple Crown race because nobody else could see either. I just had to get the winner right at the wire. Thankfully, we knew it was Justify.”

Now, with Pimlico on the verge of a long-awaited transformation, Collmus is optimistic.

“It’s long overdue,” he said. “I think back to when the Orioles moved from Memorial Stadium to Camden Yards. The crowds got bigger, people loved the new place – it was great

then and still is. I think a new Pimlico can revitalize the industry. A modern facility that’s the right size and the right look – something that fits today’s needs. I’m confident they’ll get it right, and I can’t wait to be there for the first Preakness at the new Pimlico.”

As Pimlico prepares for construction, Churchill Downs and Belmont Park are undergoing their own renovations – suggesting a new era for the Triple Crown.

“Churchill keeps improving,” Collmus said. “Now we’re going to have two brand-new venues with

— The Starting Gate —

Pimlico and Belmont. Next year's Triple Crown might be at Laurel and Saratoga – it's wild, but that's how it goes."

Laurel Park, too, holds special meaning for him.

"There's a lot of history there for me," he said. "I spent a lot of time as a backup announcer and called a ton of races at Laurel. I haven't called one there since I was 19 – so 39 years ago."

He laughed, knowing how far even that job was from his first at the track.

"Eddie McMullen hired me as the press-box bartender – I was 17, probably not legal," he said. "I poured beers and made a lot in tips, all of which went straight to the betting window."

Asked for his pick in the 2025 Preakness, Collmus didn't hesitate.

"I think Journalism is going to be tough," he said. "He seems to be doing just fine. Horses that run big in the Derby tend to carry that form into the Preakness. Things can get trickier after that. If he's anywhere near what he was two weeks ago, he'll be great today."

Nailed it.

As Maryland's most iconic racetrack begins a new chapter, Collmus' memories remain rooted on that patch of land in Park Heights, stories told not just from a booth, but from a lifetime of crossing paths with Old Hilltop.

"It feels like you're coming to a neighborhood," he said. "The place may change, but Pimlico will always be home." ■

Jump races return to Laurel

Maryland's Laurel Park hosted its first jump races in 25 years with two hurdle races on the outer turf course June 15. In the opener, Maryland-bred Holey Moley (top photo, 2) picked up a maiden win for Molly and Paul Willis, trainer Barry Foley and jockey Virginia Korrell. Bred by Clarke Ohrstrom, the son of Maryland sire Holy Boss and hurdle stakes winner Kissar N Run won on the flat at Laurel in 2024. In the second, Irv Naylor's Travesuras (bottom photo, 1) got up in the final yards to win a first-level allowance for trainer Cyril Murphy and jockey Gerard Galligan.

Laurel hosted steeplechase racing as far back 1912, but hadn't since the Maryland Million Steeplechase of 2000. The return came to be from discussions between the management teams of The Maryland Jockey Club and the National Steeplechase Association.



JIM MCCUE (2)

Milestones

Named

By the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame, **D.G. Van Clief** as chair of the Hall of Fame's Contemporary Nominating Committee and **Josh Pons** as chair of the Pillars of the Turf Committee. The appointments were announced by Charlotte Weber, the board chair of the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame. "D.G. and Josh are two of the most respected people in racing and I have great confidence they will serve the museum at a high level in leading these important committees," Weber said. "The Hall of Fame is essential to the museum's mission, and we are grateful to both D.G. and Josh for sharing their time and expertise in this capacity. We're in good hands because of their passion for the Hall of Fame and their track record in the sport." With the new committee chairs in place, museum leadership will evaluate the overall Hall of Fame nomination and election process, including a review of the contemporary Hall of Fame voting panel. The current nominating and election procedures can be viewed on the museum website racingmuseum.org. Van Clief, a previous chair of the Pillars of the Turf Committee, succeeds the late Ed Bowen as chair of the nominating committee. Bowen chaired the committee from 1987 through 2024 before passing away in January. Van Clief is a member of the

Horse Racing Integrity and Safety Authority board of directors and an advisory trustee of the National Museum of Racing and Hall of Fame. The University of Virginia graduate was commissioned as a U.S. Navy officer and served with the U.S. Marine Corps. His leadership in racing has included stints as president and CEO of Breeders' Cup; CEO of the National Thoroughbred Racing Association; chairman of Fasig-Tipton Co.; and CEO of Nydris Stud (his family's Thoroughbred breeding and sales business). Van Clief has been recognized with the Eclipse Award of Merit, The Jockey Club Medal, TOBA National Service Award, and the Kentucky Thoroughbred Media's Ambassador of Racing Award. Pons is a third-generation Maryland horseman who owns and operates Country Life Farm and Merryland Farm with his brother, Mike Pons. The graduate of the University of Virginia and the University of Kentucky School of Law has served on the Pillars of the Turf Committee for two years and is a museum advisory trustee. An Eclipse Award-winning writer in 1982 and 1992, Pons is the author of three books about the Thoroughbred industry: *Country Life Diary*, *Three Years in the Life of a Thoroughbred Horse Farm* (1992); *Merryland*, *Two Years in the Life of a Racing Stable* (2007); and *Letters from Country Life: Adolphe Pons, Man o' War, and the Founding of*

Maryland's Oldest Thoroughbred Farm (2024). His service to the industry includes two terms as president of the Maryland Horse Breeders Association. Pons is head of the Maryland Horse Library and Education Center, and a board member of the Maryland Thoroughbred Horsemen's Association. The museum's other Hall of Fame committees will continue to be chaired by Michael Veitch (Historic Review Committee) and Beverly Steinman (Steeplechase Review Committee), respectively.

Won

The final race in front of the Pimlico grandstand building, Mid-Atlantic-based jockey **Carol Cedeno** in a romp aboard Arabian gelding **Diamond Gem**. Bred in Mississippi, the 6-year-old won the \$200,000 UAE President's Cup by 14 1/2 lengths for owners/breeders Joseph and Betty Gillis and trainer Jereneso Torrez.

Saddled

Two starters on Preakness Day at her home racetrack, Marylander **Bethany Baumgardner**. The former amateur steeplechase jockey (second by a nose in the 2014 Maryland Hunt Cup aboard Imperial Way) sent out Ocean Club to a third in the Gallorette Stakes-G3 and Betula (GB) to a second in an allowance. Baumgardner works for owner/breeder Glen Hill Farm in Florida, and won five races as a trainer in 2024.

Milestones

Honored

With awards from the Maryland Jockey Club at the Alibi Breakfast May 15, journalists **Tom Law** and **Ron Flatter**, photographer **Tim Sudduth**, track announcer **Dave Rodman** and MyRacehorse founder **Michael Behrens**. Law, a regular contributor to *Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred*, received the Old Hilltop Award for covering Thoroughbred racing with excellence and distinction. Law started covering racing with his hometown newspaper *The Saratogian* in 1994 and later worked for *Thoroughbred Times*. In addition to his work with this magazine, Law is the managing editor of ST Publishing, which produces *The Saratoga Special* and thisishorseracing.com, and editor of *The Horsemen's Journal*. He is a past president of the National Turf Writers and Broadcasters and has also earned the Red Smith Kentucky Derby Writing Award, the David F. Woods Memorial Preakness Writing Award, and is a two-time Joe Hirsch Memorial Belmont Stakes Writing Award. Flatter won this year's Woods Award for a story on trainer Kenny McPeck in *Horse Racing Nation*. For his photo of Seize the Grey and jockey Jaime Torres crossing the 2024 Preakness finish line, Sudduth received the Jerry Frutkoff Photography Award, given each year for best Preakness picture. Behrens and MyRacehorse, owner of Seize the Grey, were named

honorary postmaster for Preakness 150, joining previous honorees Hall of Fame trainers D. Wayne Lukas, Nick Zito and Bob Baffert; Hall of Fame jockey Edgar Prado; and Horse of the Year recipients Cigar and Knicks Go. Behrens is the founder and CEO of the platform that brought fractional racehorse ownership to the masses.

Won

His 2,500th race, jockey **Jaime Rodriguez**, Maryland's leader in 2023 and 2024, and among the nation's top jockeys for several years, aboard Hardy Choice at Delaware Park May 31. Rodriguez, 34, recently notched his seventh Maryland Jockey Club riding title when he edged Mychel Sanchez and Sheldon Russell to win the Laurel Park spring meet. Rodriguez attended the famed Escuela Vocacional Hipica in his native Puerto Rico and rode his first domestic winner when East of Eden prevailed at Belmont Park May 5, 2010. Jamie Ness, Rodriguez's main patron, trains Hardy Choice. Together, Ness and Rodriguez produced more than 540 wins. Rodriguez enjoyed a career year in 2024, setting lifetime marks in mounts (1,199), wins (272), seconds (210), thirds (190), and earnings (\$9,538,475). He placed fourth in the nation in victories.

Scheduled

The replacement of its Tapeta Footings track for this summer, Maryland's **Fair Hill Training Center**.

Tapeta Footings will upgrade the 7-furlong track, one of the company's earliest installations, to the newest iteration, Tapeta 13. Funding was in place, material was being acquired and work was slated to begin in mid-July and take approximately six weeks though weather and other factors could shift that timeline. Fair Hill, home to approximately

Names of the Month

Not Listening.

Joe Fowler's 4-year-old hurdler is by Audible out of Pay Attention.

Spin It.

Green Valley Construction's 4-year-old hurdler is by Hard Spun out of Try Your Luck.

Energize.

Godolphin's homebred, in the Mid-Atlantic with trainer Mike Stidham, is out of Enliven.

One Nine Hundred.

The 3-year-old colt, owned by Steven Rocco, Reeves Thoroughbred Racing and Adelphi Racing Club, is by Dialed In out of Hedonism.

— The Starting Gate —

Milestones

700 Thoroughbred racehorses in 18 privately owned barns, was founded in 1983 with a 7-furlong wood-chip track and upgraded to include a 1-mile dirt track shortly thereafter. The wood chips were replaced 19 years ago with Tapeta, a synthetic training surface consisting of silica sand, wax and fibers created by former trainer Michael Dickinson. The first version was designed and installed at his Tapeta Farm in 1997. He and his wife Joan Wakefield established Tapeta Footings in 2005, and tracks have been installed throughout the world including Presque Isle Downs in Pennsylvania and Canada's Woodbine Racecourse. The new Belmont Park will include a Tapeta 13 surface. The Fair Hill project has been several years in the making, spurred by conversations among barn owners, the condominium association board, Tapeta Footings and others. Funds acquired via condominium fees, state grants and a business loan will pay for the project. "It's been a two-and-a-half year project," said Buddy Jones, co-owner of two barns on the property who spearheaded the funding effort. "A lot of people did a lot of work to get here, and we're excited about the future. Fair Hill has a big economic impact in Cecil County and the state, and that was an important point to keep in mind. We're grateful to the barn owners, the state of Maryland, Tapeta Footings and everyone who helped make this

a reality." Construction steps will include removal of the existing footing, a thorough examination of and repairs to the porous asphalt base, blending of the new material on site and finally installation of the new surface on the same footprint inside the dirt oval. Unlike the nearly black Tapeta 1, the new version is lighter in color and does not use rubber as part of the formula. The Tapeta replacement comes with the recent re-opening of the Fair Hill turf course, long home to the Fair Hill Races steeplechase meet, for training on state-owned property adjacent to the training center. The 1-mile course was rebuilt and redesigned in 2019-20 as part of a multi-discipline equine competition facility with the goal of regular training access and additional racing opportunities. Horses used the course for galloping, breezing and schooling over hurdles in April, May and June, and organizers were working with the Maryland Department of Natural Resources, which owns the race course, to facilitate racing's return.

Represented

By his first winner, regional freshman sire Galawi (Ire), when Maryland-bred Gala Gold scored in an \$11,000 maiden special weight for 2-year-olds at Energy Downs in Wyoming May 25.

Bred by Twin Oaks Bloodstock from the Uncle Mo mare Good Life Cider, Gala Gold sold to Pennsylvania owner Ken Kachel for \$3,000 as a



short yearling at Keeneland January in 2024. In September, the filly sold again in the Inglis Digital sale (for \$1,000) to Eliana Thompson. Trained by Jon Zimmerman for Stacy Budell, the bay filly won her debut by 14¼ lengths after a half-mile in :49.80. She returned to finish seventh in the John Schiffer Memorial Futurity at the track June 21.

Standing at Maryland's Northview Stallion Station, Galawi is the first freshman sire in the region with a winner and through June 26 was one of 15 freshmen stallions nationally with winners. Galawi bred 31 mares in his first season, 2022, and is represented by 12 foals so far. Another Maryland-bred filly, Ginger Snap, finished second in her debut at Laurel Park June 13. A son of Dubawi (Ire), Galawi raced for breeder Wertheimer and Frere twice in France and once in the United States, a maiden win going 1¼ miles at Belmont Park in 2021, before being injured. His dam Galikova (Fr) won a Group 1, earned \$1.1 million and is a half-sister to three-time Breeders' Cup Mile-G1 winner Goldikova (Ire).

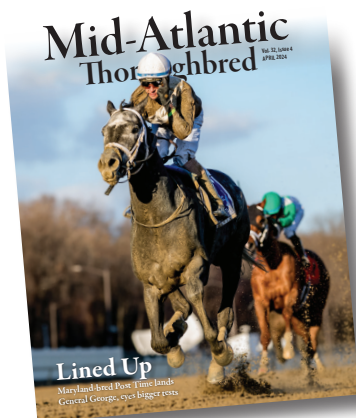
Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred honored for excellence

M*id-Atlantic Thoroughbred* magazine received four first-places – including the evening's top award for General Excellence Overall Publication – at the 2025 American Horse Publications Equine Media conference, in Dallas, Texas, May 15-17. The awards are part of AHP's annual Equine Media Awards, which includes work from member publications in numerous equine disciplines.

Judges singled out the monthly magazine, published by the Maryland Horse Breeders Association since 1936, for its overall quality. "This publication's mission statement – that it focuses on stories, not news – probably explains why the writing shot it into the lead spot for this category," noted a judge's comments. "For instance, 'Spending time with Post Time' started with a graphic picture of the surroundings and the horse. The writing continued to hold interest and gave the reader a real feel for the horse's character."

Presented for material published in 2024, the evening celebrated excellence in more than 50 equine categories.

In addition to the overall honor, the magazine won the General Excellence award for its category, Print Publication with a Circulation Under 10,000.



Editor Joe Clancy's feature titled "20/20 Hindsight" won the Association/Organization Publication Equine Media Feature Single Article (print or online) category. The article appeared in the May 2024 edition and looked back at the career of Pennsylvania-bred star Smarty Jones, 20 years after he won the Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes.

Maryland-based freelance photographer Scott Serio of Eclipse Sportswire won the Editorial Action Photograph category for "Night Rider," a photo of Skippy Longstocking winning the Charles Town Classic. Published in the October 2024 edition, the photo also won the 2024 Eclipse Award for photography in Thoroughbred racing. Delaware-based freelance photographer Jim Graham's stretch shot from the Maryland Hunt Cup (published in the June 2024 edition) finished second in that category.

Clancy took second place in the News Reporting Related Feature Single Article (print or online) category for his coverage of the 2024 Maryland Hunt Cup and winner Blackhall (Ire) titled "Timber Classic" (June 2024), as well as Editorial Event Coverage Single Article (print or online) for his article "Grabbing Hold" on Seize the Grey's 2024 Preakness Stakes-G1 win (July/August 2024). Vinnie Perrone received an honorable mention under the Human-Animal Bond Article (print or online) category for "Wonder Horse" – the story of 1920s marvel Lady Wonder – which appeared in the February issue.

Published 11 times a year by the Maryland Horse Breeders Association, *Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred* is a multiple AHP award winner in numerous categories and has a small staff led by editor Joe Clancy, designer and director of publications Barrie Reightler, and assistant editor and research director Cindy Deubler.

AHP was founded in 1970 by the editors and publishers of a half-dozen equine publications. Today, dozens of members in a variety of categories span a variety of horse breeds and sports as the professional membership association promotes excellence in equine media and encourages relationships and communication within the horse industry through education and networking. ■

Headlines of the Month

Never let it be said that Dan Illman of the new Maryland Jockey Club doesn't enjoy a good play on words. The former *Daily Racing Form* writer, and current communications director, sends updates on racing action at Laurel Park and Pimlico Race Course complete with headlines such as:

- "Ginger Girl too spicy in Saturday feature."
- "Davyjonz Rocks and Rolls in Sunday Opener."
- "New King Reigns Supreme in Laurel Feature."
- "Instant Coffee Grinds to Saturday Feature Win."

Mid-Atlantic-bred Stakes Winners

May 6 – June 9

Maryland-bred

BARBADIAN RUNNER, dk.b./br.g., 2022, Barbados—Quiet Run, by Northern Afleet. B-Shamrock Farm; O-AJ Will Win Stables LLC; T-Henry Walters. \$100,000 Jersey Derby, Monmouth, May 31.

BOSSEERATI, dk.b./br.m., 2020, Holy Boss—Candy Striper, by Twirling Candy. B/O-Joel Politi; T-Brittany T. Russell. \$100,000 The Very One Stakes, Pimlico, May 16.

MR. FINE THREADS, b.g., 2013, Sightseeing—Seven Counties, by Wayne County (Ire). B-William R. Harris; O-Armata Stable; T-Joseph G. Davies. \$35,000 Willowdale Steeplechase S, Willowdale, May 10.

SEISMIC BEAUTY, b.f., 2021, Uncle Mo—Knarsdale, by Medaglia d'Oro. B-2500 Determined Stud; O-MyRacehorse & Peter Leidel; T-Bob Baffert. \$200,000 Santa Margarita S-G2, Santa Anita, May 25.

TAKETHMONEYHONEY, dk.b./br.f., 2021, Golden Lad—Goodonehoney, by Great Notion. B/O-Kasey K Racing Stable, Michael Day & Final Turn Racing Stable; T-Michael M. Moore. \$100,000 Serena's Song S, Monmouth, May 11.



COGLIANESE PHOTOGRAPHY

Book'em Danno won the Grade 3 True North at Saratoga June 7.

New Jersey-bred

BOOK'EM DANN0, dk.b./br.g., 2021, Bucchero—Adorabella, by Ghostzapper. B-Gregory J. Kilka & Bright View Farm; O-Atlantic Six Racing LLC; T-Derek S. Ryan. \$400,000 True North S-G3, Saratoga, June 7.

FOREVER CHOCOLATE, dk.b./br.g., 2019, Boys At Tosconova—Chocolate Blush, by Fit to Fight. B/O-Janet Laszlo; T-Rory K. Huston. \$85,000 Friendly Lover H, Monmouth, June 8.

MIA'S CRUSADE, b.m., 2019, Greenpointcrusader—Mini Moneigh, by Mo Mon. B-Dianne Boyken; O-Prancing Horse Farm LLC; T-Chuck Spina. \$85,000 Smart N Classy H, Monmouth, June 1.

SPEAKING, dk.b./br.g., 2019, Mr Speaker—High Noon Nellie, by Silver Deputy. B/O-Holly Crest Farm; T-Eddie Owens Jr. \$85,000 John J. Reilly H, Monmouth, May 18.

SUMMER'S COMIN, gr./ro.f., 2021, Summer Front—Emirates Girl, by Unbridled's Song. B-Helen Barbazon & Joseph Barbazon; O/T-Michael Dini. \$85,000 Spruce Fir H, Monmouth, May 17.

Pennsylvania-bred

WITTY, gr./ro.g., 2019, Great Notion—Zeezee Zoomzoom, by Congrats. B/T-Elizabeth M. Merryman; O-Qatar Racing LLC, Marc Detampel & Elizabeth M. Merryman. \$125,000 Jim McKay Turf Sprint S, Pimlico, May 17.

West Virginia-bred

MENDYS HONEY, b.f., 2021, Mendelssohn—Honey Chile, by Invisible Ink. B-James F. Miller; O-Ultra Championship Racing LLC; T-Anthony Farrior. \$75,000 Fancy Buckles S, Charles Town, May 31.

MOONLIT NOTION, gr./ro.c., 2022, Great Notion—Moonlit Song, by Fiber Sonde. B-Timothy C. Grams & Judith A. Grams; O-Grams Racing Stable LLC; T-Timothy C. Grams. \$75,000 Coin Collector S, Charles Town, May 10.

THE RACING BIZ

The Independent Voice for Mid-Atlantic Racing and Breeding

The man who put the "Hi Ho" in Pimlico: Nearly 50 years ago, an ad agency approached Steve Karmen to write a jingle for Pimlico. Legions of racing fans still say, "Hi Ho, Pimlico!" Nick Hahn catches up with Karmen.

De Francis Dash a lasting tribute: Joe De Francis sought to create a race that would be a "lasting tribute" to his father. But he's not sure he likes it being called historic. Frank Vepse reports.

"Knuckleheads" enjoying the ride with Irish Maxima: For lifelong friends from Pennsylvania who are Irish Three Racing, Irish Maxima is taking them on a ride they never imagined. Teresa Genaro gets the story.

Mindframe to the top in latest top Midlantic-Bred Poll: In the second Top Midlantic-bred Poll of 2025, Maryland-bred Mindframe took over among older horses.

Davyjonz shrugs off layoff to graduate: No monkeeing around... Davyjonz brought references to the Monkees frontman – who was a big horse racing fan – as he surged between horses to break his maiden off a long layoff at Laurel Park.

Family, work ethic keys for Delaware-based Martin Chuan: Jockey Martin Chuan has been turning heads at the Delaware Park meet with his "off the charts" work ethic and steady presence aboard horses. Emily White reports.

Photo Diary: Best of Preakness 2025: Allison Janezic and her camera were all over the place at Pimlico during Preakness 2025. See her best images from the week.

— The Starting Gate —

Locals reward longshot players at Pimlico

The big prizes went to national names as the California-based Journalism won the Preakness and the Kentucky-based Margie's Intention landed the Black-Eyed Susan, but Mid-Atlantic horses hung tough in some undercard races on Pimlico Race Course's big weekend. In Friday's fifth race, Laurel Park-based trainer Niall Saville upset the Bob Baffert-trained Privman in a maiden special weight

with first-time starter Cadeau d'Argent. Bred in Pennsylvania by Chris Gracie and owned by Stormyvale Farm, the Gift Box gelding paid \$137.40 for a \$2 win bet as the 1-5 favorite settled for second. Two races later, trainer Lynn Ashby's Pennsylvania-bred Sharp Tones won a 1-mile turf allowance over the Brad Cox-trained favorite Army Officer. Bred and owned by Ashby and William Gotwals, the winner paid

\$77.20. Saturday produced some big numbers as well. Virginia trainer Susan Cooney won the second race, a 1-mile turf allowance, with 4-year-old filly The Amazing Mizzen, who scored by a neck and paid \$89.60. In the fifth, Maryland-bred Preparefortakeoff returned \$113.20 with a turf-sprint allowance win for trainer Hassan Elamri, also the mare's co-owner with James Smith Jr.

Crossword Puzzle of the Month

From the June 19 *New York Times* mini-crossword puzzle:

Clue: "Journalism is a noted one for 2025."

Answer (of course): "Horse."



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— Next Chapters —

BY MAGGIE KIMMITT

Jerry Jillette



NIKKI SHERMAN

Many who know him probably aren't familiar with his registered name. Stephanie Pastore, who has owned him for 16 years, refers to him as "Halo." To The Jockey Club, he's Jerry Jillette, which sounds more like a South Florida car salesman than a Florida-bred racehorse. But it's the name given him by breeders North Star Equine when he was foaled in the Sunshine State in 2003.

Pastore, who dug deep into the now 22-year-old gelding's background, always wanted to know the significance of his name. She was never successful, leaving all to speculate about the elusive Jerry Jillette.

Pastore's story is a cautionary tale, with a twist. At 41, she found herself post-divorce and living with her widowed mother in Old Tappan, N.J. "Bored with my life and depressed," she started taking riding lessons in 2008 after riding and showing as a child.

"I was all happy again, and I was remembering something my father said to me: 'When you can afford it, you can get a horse,'" Pastore said. "So it popped into my head one day – 'OhmyGod, you can get a horse. You can afford it.'"

Her search began online with websites like Dream Horse and Equine Now, where she found a nearly black gelding and kept returning to his listing.

Pastore arranged for a trial, accompanied by her instructor and the instructor's niece. When she saw him, Pastore was instantly in love.

"The looks alone had me," she said. "The seller rode him first, and I thought he was tremendous. She even jumped him, and I hadn't jumped for a long time. He over-cleared the fences like you wouldn't believe. Then I got on. I just walked around for a minute and as soon as I trotted, he had me. I had never felt anything like it in my life. He was calm and the perfect gentleman. I was like, 'I have to have this horse.'"

Her instructor urged her to continue her search and try other horses, but Pastore was convinced the 6-year-old was her perfect match. Within a few days, she contacted the seller to say she was interested in making an offer.

"At that time, I didn't know much about buying and selling horses," Pastore said.

What she did know was that the horse was listed on several websites at different prices. The advertisement she pursued, which listed him as an appendix-registered Quarter Horse/Thoroughbred, offered him at \$7,500. A different website stated he was a Thoroughbred with an asking price of \$12,500. Pastore offered \$5,000; the offer was rebuked, but the seller finally agreed to accept \$6,500. Pastore arranged a pre-purchase exam with a local veterinarian.

"The vet was very good and honest with me. She said, 'Heart's good, eyes are good, his feet need a little work,' but she had noticed a little something in the right front. Did I want to do a nerve block? When the vet went back a few days later, she said he was a totally different horse. Very up and animated, but did appear sound. So OK, I buy the horse, and this is one of those stories that makes people realize you really should know more before you go buy a horse."

As expected, there was excitement – and growing pains – after she brought her new mount to the boarding facility where she rode. Not long after his arrival, the calm, perfect gentleman began running off with her on a regular basis. With no turnout available, "Halo" was not adjusting well to so much time in a stall. It wasn't long before Pastore's instructor advised her to get rid of him.

Pastore had a simple answer, "No."

"Was he too much horse for me at the time? Probably yes. But I was searching for someone who could really teach me how to ride," she said. "I wanted someone to help me help him. I had made a commitment when I bought this horse, and he wasn't going anywhere, no matter what."

So began a quest to discover as much as she could about her horse. His Coggins test listed his previous owner as Cranbury Stables – an auction lot in Cranbury, N.J. The date indicated it had been drawn just a few weeks prior to her finding the horse online.

His difficult-to-read tattoo revealed his true identity. Jerry Jillette was by the Storm Cat stallion Tiger Ridge, a half-brother to A.P. Indy out of the blue hen Secretariat mare Weekend Surprise. His dam was Shuga Cane, by Belek. He was purchased for \$42,000 from the 2004 Fasig-Tipton Kentucky select yearling sale by agent Brian Morgan.

Jerry Jillette made his first start at Belmont Park Oct. 26, 2005, for trainer Carlos Martin and owners Philip and Marcia

"Was he too much horse for me at the time? Probably yes. But I was searching for someone who could really teach me how to ride. I wanted someone to help me help him."

– *Stephanie Pastore,*
about early days with Jerry Jillette

Cohen. He won and was claimed for \$35,000 by Jimmy Ferraro for Sanford Goldfarb, and spent the next two years running in New York, New Jersey and Pennsylvania, changing hands six times before ending up in the barn of Shaun Baker late in 2007. His last start came Oct. 31, 2007, at Penn National. He left racing with a statistical line of 34-5-8-4 and \$113,200.

Determined to contact Baker, Pastore called racetracks where he had run horses. Not surprisingly, those offices wouldn't divulge any information. She noticed the name of a jockey who had recently ridden for Baker – Vince Halliday – and decided instead to reach out in that direction.

Through a Google search, she found Halliday via an Irish social-media account on Bebo and sent a message: "Hi, my name is Stephanie. I bought this ex-racehorse and I'm having some problems with him. I'm looking for the trainer who had him last, Shaun Baker. And I saw that you had ridden for him so I was wondering if there was any way you could put me in touch with him. I'd appreciate any help you could give me. If it's easier, this is my phone number."

Two days later, Halliday left her a voice mail: "Hiya, this is Vince Halliday calling. I received your email. Gimme a wee buzz when you get a chance."

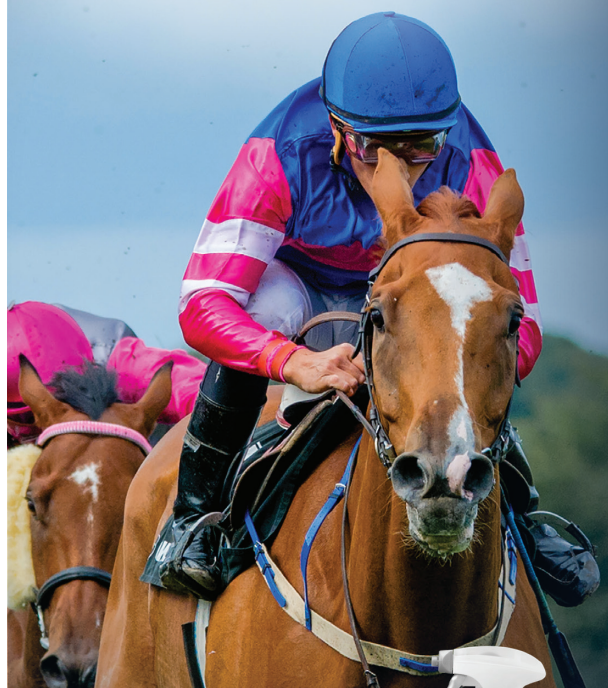
At first, the brogue threw her.

"How am I going to understand this person on the phone?" she asked herself. She called, talked to Halliday, explained the situation and he asked a simple question. "Well, what are ya feedin' him? Maybe that's your problem."

Halliday gave Pastore Baker's contact information. She was a bit apprehensive, but Halliday assured her that Baker would

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be thrilled to know she was giving an ex-racehorse a good home. Before ending their conversation, Halliday told Pastore to, "Keep in touch and let me know how it's going."

Pastore appreciated Halliday's help, and reached out to Baker.

"Which horse do you have?" the trainer asked.

"Jerry Jillette."

"Black with a white stripe on his face, he's six years old?"

"Yes, that's him."

"I love that horse."

Paydirt. Pastore was overjoyed with the information Baker shared. He had Jerry Jillette's win photo on his mantle at home. The horse's favorite foods were Pringles – "the spicy chips in the can" – and pepperoni pizza. Baker referred to the gelding as, "a star who can do anything."

Baker was just as interested to hear what Pastore had to say. She filled him in, and explained the problem she was having with him running off with her.

"Well," Baker asked, "What are ya feedin' him?"

Pastore kept her promise to Halliday, giving him updates about her progress with Halo. Emails turned to texts, texts to phone calls, phone calls to weekend visits with Pastore making the drive from New Jersey to Landenburg, Pa., where Halliday was living while working mornings at Fair Hill Training Center and riding races in the afternoons.

"Things evolved from having a nice friendship to maybe there's a little more to this," Pastore said. "Then one day he called me his girlfriend."

Pastore and Halliday were married in 2012. She credits him, and her exposure to so many horsemen in the racing industry, with deepening her affection for Thoroughbreds and expanding her knowledge. As a jockey's wife, she traveled with him to different racetracks, "obviously learning a lot."

Halliday learned about horse shows and dressage as Pastore continued to progress with Jerry Jillette. Comments upon meeting the horse for the first time all those years ago proved prophetic. Watching Pastore beam and shower him with affection, Halliday announced, "That horse ain't goin' nowhere."

He didn't. Jerry Jillette lives on a farm in southern New Jersey, about 40 minutes from Pastore and Halliday's home in Newark, Del. Still studdish at 22, his constant companion is a pony gelding named Noddy.

"I was really just looking for a horse," Pastore laughed, "but I got a horse and an Irishman out of it."

Happily, she still has both. Must be what she's feeding them. ■



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— From the editor —

BY JOE CLANCY

Schedule makes Triple Crown special

One horse. One race. They're all that separates Thoroughbred racing from experiencing its 14th Triple Crown winner this year and all the ancillary benefits of attention, popularity, buzz and – in 2025-speak – influence.

And people want to run around shouting about the sky falling.

Journalism ran in all three legs of the series – finishing second in the Kentucky Derby-G1, winning the Preakness Stakes-G1 and again placing second in the Belmont Stakes-G1. Sovereignty won the Derby and the Belmont, stopping Journalism from joining Sir Barton, Gallant Fox, Omaha, War Admiral, Whirlaway, Count Fleet, Assault, Citation, Secretariat, Seattle Slew, Affirmed, American Pharoah and Justify on the list.

So one horse stopped Journalism's Triple Crown bid.

Just so we're straight on this, Sovereignty won the Derby and the Belmont but bypassed the Preakness – won by Journalism.

So one race stopped Sovereignty's Triple Crown bid.

No one knows what would have happened if Sovereignty contested the Preakness, but it all might just mean there's nothing wrong with three major races in five weeks. An

owner or trainer might opt to run a horse in all three – as Journalism's did; another might choose to run in just two of the races – as Sovereignty's did.

And that's just fine.

From a marketing/media/attention standpoint, racing will always deal with the issue of continuity from one race to the next. The athletes are animals and their connections have options, which means the starting lineups won't always be the same. And, even if it's good for the game, no one should run if they don't think it's the right decision for their horse.

Of course, without the Derby winner trying to keep Triple Crown hopes alive, the Preakness suffers, and the Belmont Stakes always means more when there's a Triple Crown on the line. Adjusting the schedule to make those things more likely sounds logical, but cheapens the achievement of a sweep and risks losing the public's attention in the process. Casual fans have a hard enough time following Thoroughbred racing. Making them try to do it over a longer period presents another challenge.

One horse ran in all three legs of the Triple Crown this year, and his people wouldn't change anything – other than the result.

"I can't imagine being around a horse better than Journalism and while he was 2-1-2 in all three legs, he didn't do it," said Aron Wellman of Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners. "He ran great in all of them, take nothing away from the horse. In many other years, he probably wins the Triple Crown, but he ran into Sovereignty. It's supposed to be hard, it's supposed to take a special plus, plus, plus horse to do it."

Wellman has tried to climb the Triple Crown mountain before – as an employee of Team Valor International when Animal Kingdom won the 2011 Derby, finished second in the Preakness and was sixth in the Belmont; with Danza, who finished third in the 2014 Derby and got hurt while training for the Belmont; with Destin, who finished sixth in the 2016 Derby and lost the Belmont by a nose; with Tapwrit, who finished sixth in the 2017 Derby and won the Belmont; with the filly Nest, who finished second in the 2022 Kentucky Oaks-G1 and the Belmont.

Other than with Animal Kingdom, losses in the Derby kept those horses out of the Preakness. So did circumstances. Running back in two weeks wasn't the right call, but the incentive to do so wasn't there either. Organizers should work to bring back a bonus program to reward participation in all three races, with a bigger payday for a sweep. Journalism's

owners earned \$2.56 million in purses for his three starts. Racing gained who knows how much more value because he tried all three; imagine if Sovereignty had gone along with him.

"It's a lot of money but it's not nearly what he deserves for doing what he did and the monetary upside that he brought to the industry and the racetracks for running in all three races . . . put any multiple you want on what we earned for doing it," Wellman said. "If we come up with some creative structure to incentivize people to be a little bit more bold about it, then I think you're going to get the best horses for it."

People still talk about the Triple Crown matchups involving Affirmed and Alydar in 1978 and Sunday Silence and Easy Goer in 1989. They're the stuff of legends, as are all the Triple Crown sweeps. It should take legends to join them in the discussion.

"It's reserved for those horses who can handle the rigor, the competition, the stress of those three races at those three tracks," said Wellman. "Don't change this. This is what makes it." ■



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On Deadline

JOURNALISM WRITES A MASTERPIECE IN PREAKNESS THRILLER

By Joe Clancy



Michael McCarthy was 18, wondering what direction his life might take. The Californian grew up close enough to Santa Anita Park to hear the race calls from home and enjoyed working with horses. He thought a racing career might go somewhere if he could figure out a way to pursue one for real.

Then he watched the 1989 Preakness Stakes.

Sunday Silence defeated Easy Goer by a nose – a repeat of their Kentucky Derby finish two weeks prior but with more drama. This time, Easy Goer and Pat Day moved early and beat Sunday Silence to the lead leaving the backstretch. Going around his rival and pacesetter Houston, Day squeezed

Sunday Silence back to third to take control. Or so it seemed. Patrick Valenzuela re-engaged Sunday Silence and made up 2 lengths to pull ahead coming off the turn. Ali and Frazier didn't trade harder punches. In tight on the rail, Easy Goer answered the challenge and took a slim advantage at the eighth pole. Outside, Sunday Silence fought back. In the last yards, Day shifted his reins, and Easy Goer cocked his head to the right as Sunday Silence inched ahead. Neither horse yielded; Sunday Silence prevailed in a two-sizes-too-small photo.

McCarthy saw it all in a friend's living room in California. "His father was a trainer, and I remember him talking through the race and as he was talking through the race he



RICK BUCKLEY

Umberto Rispoli heads to the Preakness winner's circle aboard Journalism.

had mentioned, 'Look at Pat, he's trying to screw Patrick all the way around there,' and sure enough when they pulled up and Charlise Cantey interviewed Patrick Valenzuela he said verbatim, 'Pat tried screwing me the whole way around there.' I thought it was so surreal that someone sitting there on the couch could tell you what was going on in a race like that. It left an impact on me."

That man on the couch? California stalwart Gary Jones. He trained Hall of Famer Best Pal, won Grade 1 stakes with Turkoman, Kostroma (Ire), Lakeway and Quiet American. The son of another California legend Farrell Jones, Gary won 1,465 races and 102 graded stakes. His trainees earned \$52.6 million and put him in racing's Hall of Fame.

And he narrated one of the greatest races of all-time for a teenager. Yeah, that'll make an impression.

McCarthy walked hots at Santa Anita while taking night classes at Cal Poly Pomona, worked for a veterinarian, spent time at a training center in Japan and at the National Stud in England. He parlayed all that and more into jobs with train-

ers Doug Peterson and Ben Cecil, and in 2002 accepted a position with Todd Pletcher. McCarthy stayed for more than 11 years, hanging up MWM webbing as a trainer for real in 2014.

Ten years and change after that, McCarthy stood in the dusk at Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore, Md., after Journalism fought through trouble in the stretch and caught Gosger in the waning moments of the 150th Preakness Stakes-G1 May 17. The last one before a complete teardown and reimagination of the old racetrack first used for racing in 1870, this year's edition didn't quite repeat 1989 but tried its best.

After Goal Oriented and Heart of Honor (GB) acted up a little in the gate, all nine runners broke well on a fast track that was sloppy and sealed 24 hours earlier. From post eight, Clever Again cleared, angled to the rail and led Gosger, Goal Oriented, American Promise, River Thames and Journalism through an opening quarter-mile of :23.19. They stayed that way through a half in :46.66, though Journalism lost a little position to be 5 lengths off the leader.

Umberto Rispoli asked the even-money favorite for more effort, and got a tepid answer. Journalism trailed five foes on the final turn and through 6 furlongs in 1:10.23.

"At that point you think two things – you have no horse or he is just too relaxed," Rispoli said. "I think the second was the option because as soon as I gave a smack on the shoulder he said, 'OK, I know what I've got to do.'"

Not forward enough to get into the clear outside horses early on the turn, Rispoli stayed inside and saved ground. He advanced to get alongside Goal Oriented – and into a pocket behind a backing-up Clever Again – just before the quarter pole. Aboard Goal Oriented, Flavien Prat tried to keep Journalism there, but the son of 2007 Preakness winner Curlin forced himself between horses. Goal Oriented leaned in and got knocked off stride, or got knocked off stride and leaned in (you decide), Clever Again and Jose Ortiz nearly brushed the inside rail and Journalism finally found clear racetrack at the eighth pole.

"Going to the elbow, a little gap was opening and I said, 'It's now or never,'" Rispoli said of his decision to go between horses at the top of the stretch. "It's horse racing, it's a nice battle for the sport. Everybody came out safe. I'm sorry about Jose, he had to check, and I had to give a shout to Flavien and he straightened up his horse right away."

Meanwhile, Gosger took the express lane. From a stalking spot in second, the Stonestreet Lexington Stakes-G3 winner passed Clever Again and built a 5-length lead. Just when he and Luis Saez looked poised to spring a 15-1 upset for trainer Brendan Walsh, Journalism came running like a late-for-dinner Labrador.

“When I looked up, Luis opened up 4 lengths ahead of me,” said Rispoli, “and the first time I used the crop on him he switched his lead and, boom, he took off.”

From there, only time, distance and willpower mattered. Journalism had enough to get there. Could he get there before Gosger reached the finish line?

“OK, I think I’m going to be late,” Rispoli told himself, “but probably on time.”

Three lengths down at the 16th pole, a length down with the wire looming, Journalism drew even by the last flower in the PIMLICO plantings along the rail and won by a half-length as Rispoli turned down his crop and hand-rode the last eight strides to complete $1\frac{3}{16}$ miles in 1:55.47. Sandman settled for third, $2\frac{1}{4}$ lengths behind Gosger, followed by Goal Oriented, Heart of Honor, River Thames, Pay Billy, American Promise and a roughed-up Clever Again.

McCarthy saw his horse run into trouble and thought he’d settle for a minor award two weeks after finishing second to Sovereignty as the Kentucky Derby-G1 favorite.

“It was basically more or less kind of what I thought coming to the 16th pole in the Kentucky Derby when I saw Sovereignty coming to us,” the trainer said. “I thought it was just another fantastic effort. A couple things didn’t work out well for us Derby Saturday, but this here was a little bit more drastic than just losing some ground at the start and having to deal with off going on a muddy racetrack. This looked a little bit ugly there for a couple of jumps . . . My initial thought was, proud of the horse. Great effort. Just going to come up a little bit short.”

Until he didn’t.

Owned by Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners, Bridlewood Farm, Don Alberto Stable, Bob LaPenta, Elayne Stables and the Coolmore Stallions team of Susan Magnier, Michael Tabor and Derrick Smith, Journalism paid \$4 to win and struck a blow for guts – human and equine. Sovereignty bypassed the Preakness, and a chance to become racing’s 14th Triple Crown winner, in favor of a five-week timetable to the Belmont Stakes-G1. He wasn’t alone, as only Journalism, Sandman (seventh in the Derby) and American Promise (16th) shipped to Baltimore after running in the Derby.

“I just think that this victory symbolizes so much about life,” said Aron Wellman of Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners. “It took guts for Michael McCarthy to make this call to come here. It took guts for Umberto Rispoli to get sideswiped and thread the needle and power on through and it took guts from an incredible horse to somehow will his way to victory.”

Journalism won for the fifth time in seven starts, the losses a third in his debut going 6 furlongs and the Derby. The only horse to run in each leg of the 2025 Triple Crown, Journalism finished second to Sovereignty – again – in the Belmont

“Going to the elbow,
a little gap was opening
and I said, ‘It’s now or never.’”

– Jockey Umberto Rispoli,
about the late stages of the Preakness

Stakes at Saratoga Race Course June 7. Through the first half of 2025, the Kentucky-bred had put up five wins, with two seconds and a third, in eight starts for earnings of \$3,198,880.

Early promise, a partnership, then a pause

Purchased by Eclipse for \$825,000 from the Denali Stud consignment at Fasig-Tipton’s 2023 select yearling sale at Saratoga, Journalism looked the part then and brought along pedigree as a son of Curlin and the Uncle Mo mare Mopotism. Bred by North Carolina resident Frank Batten, Mopotism won a Grade 2 stakes and placed in four Grade 1 races for Reddam Racing and trainer Doug O’Neill before selling to Don Alberto Corp. for \$1.05 million as a broodmare prospect in 2019.

Sent to Tapit in 2020, Mopotism didn’t get in foal. She went to Curlin the next year and produced a colt at Don Alberto Farm, the former Vinery just northwest of Lexington, Ky. He grew up fast – well, he kind of had a head start.

“He weighed 150 pounds, mostly head and ears,” said Reed Ringler, Don Alberto’s chief operating officer. “He was her first foal so you’re thinking they might be a little smaller. You’re opening up a package and you don’t know what to expect. And this monster came out.”

The big colt made everyone on the farm say the same thing: “Holy cow, look at this guy.”

He was a big foal, with a big head, big ears and an appetite to match.

“He and his mother and the three siblings are the most hungry horses I’ve ever seen,” said Ringler. “They’re starving all the time. They’re also all very, very independent. He’d go out with his mother and just terrorize everybody.”

The colt was a Saratoga sale candidate from those early days and joined the Denali consignment with high expect-



Trainer Michael McCarthy, now 2-for-2 in the Preakness, talks with Umberto Rispoli on the turf course before the race.

tions. Eclipse won the bidding battle, and signed for the eighth highest-priced horse of the opening session.

Assessing yearlings is easy when they're 3-year-olds, but Wellman recalled plenty of items in the colt's corner. Sire and dam for starters.

"Eclipse has done well with progeny of Curlin over the years," said Wellman, listing champion Nest and major winners Curalina and Point of Honor for starters. "On the bottom side you had a mare who was very accomplished on the racetrack. Maybe I had a little bit of an edge on the East Coast competition because I knew her very well from watching her run in California. I knew what a tough and quality competitor she was."

Like all yearling shoppers, Eclipse looks at more than a catalog page.

"He's a really well-made horse," Wellman said. "He was light on his feet, he moved very well and thankfully that translated over to his mechanics as a runner. You try to pick up on the idiosyncrasies – presence, intelligence, quality – and nothing fazed him. We went back and looked five, six times and no matter what was going on he was as cool as can be."

The morning after the sale, Bridlewood's George Isaacs called and asked about buying part of the colt. Sensing a chance to repeat history, Wellman then reached out to LaPenta – a partner with Eclipse and Bridlewood on 2017

Belmont Stakes winner Tapwrit. LaPenta was in. Longtime Eclipse partner Norton Herrick, who races as Elayne Stables in honor of his wife, was in from the start, and that was that until Wellman decided to get lunch in downtown Saratoga Springs.

"I was grabbing a bite to eat on Broadway and bumped into Reed Ringer and the Don Alberto contingent, just happenstance that we crossed paths," he said. "We discussed the colt we bought from them the night prior and they expressed interest in retaining an interest. We shook hands on the spot."

And just like that Journalism's breeder and seller, the American arm of the Solari family's Chilean-based Thoroughbred program, was back in as a co-owner. Don Alberto bought Vinery in 2013 and has since put together a large broodmare band and made an impact in the sales ring and racetrack with the likes of champions Arcangelo and Unique Bella among others.

When Journalism won the San Felipe Stakes-G2 in March, major stallion farms made pitches and Coolmore won out to make a long line in the program even longer, though there's more to it.

"It came together organically," said Wellman. "Most aren't going to work out like that, but thankfully this one did, and we were fortunate to ink the deal with Coolmore. We're relieved that he delivered on their faith in him."

Journalism went to Bridlewood in Ocala, Fla., for early lessons. Founded in 1976 by Arthur and Martha Appleton, but owned by John and Leslie Malone since 2013, the 2,200-acre farm stands stallions, foals mares, and operates a training division with a dirt track, a turf track and an uphill synthetic gallop. Graduates include champions Gun Runner and Cody's Wish, Travers winner Catholic Boy, Kentucky Oaks winner Pretty Mischievous and – yes – Journalism and Sovereignty.

Journalism joined the McCarthy barn at Santa Anita in late spring and trained well enough to make the trainer contemplate a summer debut.

"He comes off the van, he looks like an \$825,000 yearling," said McCarthy of his first impression. "As we started getting a little bit more serious, he started working half-miles and things started coming to him a little faster than your average 2-year-old. He'd work as fast as his company, as slow as his company. We thought there was a chance he could make the races by the end of Del Mar."

As 2-year-olds, expensive or not, often do, Journalism scuttled that plan. After breezing three times in July, he didn't have a timed workout in August and started over in September. The first race came in late October and he finished third, running late, going 6 furlongs. He won his next two – a 1-mile maiden at Del Mar in November as opposed to August and the Los Alamitos Futurity-G2 in December – to

stamp himself a player among California-based horses looking toward the 2025 classics.

Hitting the pause button in the summer might have helped in the autumn.

"He started to get a little bit racy and just a couple of little baby types of things, so we backed off of him for about five weeks," McCarthy said. "I had said to Aron, 'We'll run.' I didn't think it was at the stage where he'd run and win, but he was just getting ready that fast. The last two weeks, three weeks, he started acting up a little bit, started getting hot coming off the racetrack and what have you. I think he just had some things happen, and we didn't run him until a little bit later."

Big steps, bigger stages

Journalism didn't miss a deadline this year, winning the San Felipe March 1 and, in a sign of things to come, overcoming trouble to win the Santa Anita Derby-G1 April 5. That day, he got shuffled to last in a five-horse field, bumped with Barnes on the far turn and got up in time to catch Baeza in the final stages.

McCarthy went to the Derby with confidence. A 5-furlong breeze at Churchill Downs only solidified the feeling. Clockers got the colt in 1:01.40, but McCarthy timed the furlong after the finish line in :11 and change and said the 1-mile gallop-out took 1:41.

"If the racetrack is as it appears today next Saturday, it will take a Herculean effort to beat him," he told himself. The Derby was six days away. Apparently, so too were a monsoon and a mythological Greek and Roman hero.

"There was one horse all week that had caught my eye, Sovereignty, and he just seemed good every day," McCarthy said. "I saw him every day."

Rain turned the Derby Day track to slop – something Journalism had never experienced in sunny California. He'd barely seen rain. Bettors made him the 7-2 favorite anyway, ahead of the influencer-influenced Sandman at almost 6-1 and Sovereignty third choice at just shy of 8-1. Tenth early, Journalism took more mud than a catfish for the first quarter-mile, figured it out and swept to the lead while five wide off the turn. A Godolphin homebred trained by Bill Mott, Sovereignty followed Journalism while even wider around the turn. They met with three-sixteenths of a mile to go, and Sovereignty pushed away to win by 1½ lengths.

"If I could do anything over, I'd like to take the first 100 yards back," McCarthy said. "Umberto said, 'Michael, the mud hit him in the face and for about six jumps, he was like, 'What are you doing to me?' But Umberto was able to wheel him outside, get him into a good spot at the backside and at the half-mile pole, you saw him picking up horses."

"Second in the Derby might have been a little bit frustrating, and the second in the Belmont was a little frustrating, but we're all very proud of the accomplishment."

– Aron Wellman,
of Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners

Watching from section 317 in the clubhouse, McCarthy thought his horse was running a big race. He figured Journalism had everybody in front of him covered and in the mud and gloom and chaos it wasn't easy to tell much else.

"I looked up at the Jumbotron and I could see, obviously, Journalism doing his thing, coming past the quarter pole," McCarthy said. "At the corner of the Jumbotron, I could see the royal blue silks. Sovereignty. Look, the horse ran second. When you go into a race like that and you have what you believe is rightly the favorite, and he's showing you as a trainer everything you want to see, your expectations are high. To run second, you're disappointed at first. But hey, it's great to run second. It's great. It told us we weren't wrong. I thought the horse would run well. He did."

Sovereignty, who broke his maiden in the Street Sense Stakes-G3 at Churchill in October, ran better.

Two days after the Derby, Godolphin and Mott opted against running in the Preakness to deny the race – in its last iteration at the Pimlico everyone knows – a chance to play a role in the Derby winner's pursuit of the Triple Crown. Journalism's team didn't commit either, as McCarthy and Wellman went home to California and the horse stayed at Churchill Downs with groom Rolando Navas and exercise rider Marc Witkowski.

Knee-jerk reactions went every which way, even after the connections announced they intended to run Monday of Preakness week.

"Just because we waited the full week to say we were going to run had nothing to do with the race or any other horse," Wellman said. "People said we were running because Sovereignty wasn't. We're horsemen and we're going to wait

to make the best decision for our horse. Why would you say you're going to run before you have to?"

McCarthy listened to his people all week, flew back to Churchill, saw Journalism for himself eight days after the Derby and seized on the opportunity to win a classic in Maryland. At Pimlico, after Thursday's Alibi Breakfast – where he made no alibis while trading barbs with Hall of Famers and Preakness legends Bob Baffert and D. Wayne Lukas – McCarthy explained the decision-making process.

"My guys at Churchill had been telling me everything was status quo," said McCarthy, whose horse ran three races in seven weeks in 2024. "The horse has been the same way since July of his 2-year-old year. He's eaten up, trained with purpose every day. He's like one of those good horses. They do things just a little bit differently than the average racehorse. He's been like that from the start . . . You never really know how much a race like the Derby has taken out, what's been taken out of them, until Saturday afternoon. But from where I'm standing, I see a horse on his toes here, I see a sparkling feed tub in the morning and I see a horse that's trained nicely over this race-track the last couple of days. We just have to see if we can do a little better this week."

Journalism took care of that, and then some.

Three weeks after the Preakness, he and Sovereignty met again as part of an eight-runner Belmont Stakes at Saratoga Race Course. Based in Mott's barn at Saratoga since the Kentucky win, Sovereignty prevailed again – passing Journalism in the stretch and pushing out a 3-length win.

Nobody was disappointed, in anyone.

"Second in the Derby might have been a little bit frustrating, and the second in the Belmont was a little frustrating, but we're all very proud of the accomplishment," said Wellman. "A lot of stress goes along with campaigning a horse like him through that, but the horse never had a bad day. We enjoyed the experience, our families came to all three races, we're so thankful for Journalism for so many reasons. To be able to enjoy the Triple Crown experience amidst all the stress and hype that goes along with it is a blessing that I'll always be grateful to the horse for."

A California kid like McCarthy, Wellman learned racing from his parents Michael and Cory who were owners/breeders – and had horses with Gary Jones. Wellman worked on the backside as a kid and got to know Hall of Fame jockeys Willie Shoemaker and Eddie Delahoussaye so well they attended his bar mitzvah. Wellman played soccer at Cal Santa Barbara, graduated, got a law degree and worked as an attorney for six

~ PREAKNESS POSTS ~

Personal Triple Crown

Journalism co-owner Norton Herrick, whose Elayne Stables is named for his wife, was a partner in 2011 Kentucky Derby-G1 winner Animal Kingdom with Team Valor. He was also a partner with Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners when Tapwrit won the Belmont Stakes-G1 in 2017.

With Eclipse and others, Herrick achieved a personal Triple Crown when Journalism rallied in deep stretch to win this year's Preakness Stakes-G1 at Pimlico Race Course.

"He has a huge appetite for the classics and was on a mission to complete his own Triple Crown," said Eclipse's Aron Wellman, who mentioned the Herricks in a post-race interview. "He had never asked me to have his name or stable on the

program, but for some reason when we bought Journalism he asked, and we obliged. Sure enough, it came full circle. It was an honor to help make it happen."

Herrick didn't witness the achievement as his wife died May 5, two days after Journalism finished second in the Kentucky Derby. A mother of three and grandmother of five, she was 82.

Sequels on the way?

In Journalism, broodmare Mopotism produced a classic winner with her first foal. Original success can be difficult to duplicate, but the daughter of Uncle Mo is giving it a try.

Her foal of 2023, Nitro Tap, sold for \$1.5 million as a yearling as part of the Lane's End consignment at

Saratoga last year. Owned by Travis Boersman's Flying Dutchmen stable, the Tapit colt is training at Churchill Downs with Brian Lynch.

Don Alberto's Reed Ringler used "stunning" to describe Mopotism's 2024 foal, a filly by Into Mischief. She heads to Fasig-Tipton's Saratoga sale this summer and will no doubt be in high demand. Another filly, by Horse of the Year Flightline, hit the ground this year.

Bred by Frank Batten, Mopotism sold for \$135,000 as a weanling, \$200,000 as a yearling and \$300,000 as a 2-year-old. On the racetrack, she won three races (topped by a Grade 2) and placed in 11 others (10 graded stakes, four Grade 1) while based primarily in California.

Don Alberto paid \$1.05 million for her as a broodmare prospect in

years before taking a job with Team Valor International. He got a taste of the Triple Crown with Derby winner Animal Kingdom in 2011 and started Eclipse that year.

In January 2014, Eclipse became one of McCarthy's first clients – sending Norastone to the new trainer. Undeclared in two starts at Parx Racing before being purchased privately, the California-bred launched McCarthy's training career by finishing 13th (of 14) in the California Cup Oaks at Santa Anita.

"I remember when we hauled in the first couple of horses – two horses standing behind webbing in some random stalls in the back of Santa Anita's backstretch by Baldwin Avenue wondering what we were going to do with our lives," Wellman said. "True to form, Michael showed up in a crisply dry-cleaned and ironed suit and tie for a Cal-bred race and we set the tone right then. We didn't run any good, but we set the tone."

Three starts, and 11 months, later Norastone won and got claimed for \$12,500. A horse such as Journalism seemed a long way off; then again, maybe it didn't. In 2018, McCarthy claimed Ohio (Brz) for Eclipse and won a Grade 1 with him. Speech (2020) and Queen Goddess (2021) followed as Grade 1 winners. For other clients, McCarthy won the 2021 Preakness with Rombauer and saddled City of Light and Ce

Ce to Breeders' Cup wins while increasing his statistics from six wins and \$213,810 in earnings in 2014 to 78 and \$6.7 million in 2024.

"I've known him since our days growing up in California," said Wellman of McCarthy. "He was working for Todd when I was with Team Valor and our friendship melded into a professional relationship. It was obvious that when the time came for him to come home and hang out his own shingle in Southern California, Eclipse was going to support him. We built up our respective businesses together, and it brings me a lot of pride and joy watching him succeed with other owners."

The ride, which has plenty of road to go, with Journalism only brings more to the equation.

"It's as cool as it gets for the both of us, the relationship runs so deep," Wellman said. "Our families have become extremely close. We're raising children together. Mike's daughter Stella is right between Sadie and Jack. To have gone on this journey together has made it that much more special."

Win or lose.

"I don't think there are bigger competitors and intense guys than Michael and I are, but we're able to maintain perspective too."

Gary Jones would be proud. ■

2019. She has more than paid them back.

"She's such a good mare," said Ringler. "She was kind of a warrior on the track. You never know if they're going to be able to reproduce that, but she's done it."

Gonzo Journalism, almost

For all his "I got this" attitude amidst chaos in the race itself, Preakness winner Journalism flashed one bit of madness beforehand.

Exiting the turf course after the riders up command from mixed martial arts ring announcer Bruce Buffer, groom Rolando Navas and exercise rider Mark Witkowski couldn't get the horse's halter unbuckled. Walking on the dirt track in front of the grandstand, the bay colt fussed, fidgeted, tossed his

head and otherwise made his displeasure known – even knocking Witkowski to the ground – before order was restored and the favorite cantered off with the lead pony.

Journalism isn't a fan of any extra attention around his head in general, and had a right to be keyed up given the pre-race activities that included saddling in the indoor paddock, walking across the dirt track to the turf course, jockeys mounting there and then walking past the grandstand in post-position order for the TV cameras before finally getting to warm up.

"That was one tiny moment of a lack of composure on everybody's

part," said Aron Wellman of Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners, who watched it unfold from the turf course. "I take a lot of pride in having maintained my composure through all of this and that was one moment where I almost lost my stuff. The flies were bothering him, the attention, whatever, he got pissed off and rightfully so but those guys did a great job and got him on his way." ■



CARLOS CALO / ECLIPSE SPORTSWIRE

Flower Girl

MARGIE'S INTENTION LANDS BLACK-EYED SUSAN IN FIRST START AFTER SALE

By Tom Law ■ Photographs by Equi-Photo, Inc.

Margie's Intention walked into Brad Cox's barn at Churchill Downs in early April, fresh off WinStar Farm buying a majority interest in the Louisiana-bred filly, and made an immediate impression.

"Leggy filly, liked the way she moved," Cox remembered about the daughter of Honor A. P. who had placed in two Louisiana-bred stakes at Fair Grounds for trainer Brendan Walsh and owner Baron Stable.

Cox and his team didn't spend much more time getting to know the filly before she breezed a half-mile in :48.80 – seventh fastest of 86 moves at the distance that April 12 morning, three weeks before the Kentucky Derby.

"Damn, I really like her," Cox thought as she galloped out.

The solid impression continued, through five successive breezes that led to Margie's Intention running down Paris Lily in the final strides to win the featured George E. Mitchell Black-Eyed Susan Stakes-G2 May 16 at Pimlico Race Course in Baltimore, Md.

"She continued to breeze well each week, which is always the sign of a solid horse," Cox said. "She's pretty honest."

Margie's Intention, who followed up her Black-Eyed Susan win with second in the June 14 Delaware Oaks-G3, collected her third win to go with those pair of seconds in the Louisiana Broodmare of the Year Flashy Prize Stakes March 1 and Crescent City Oaks March 22. The Crescent City Oaks came on the Louisiana Derby-G2 undercard, where Cox sent out several runners, including eventual Kentucky Oaks-G1 winner Good Cheer in the Fasig-Tipton Fair Grounds Oaks-G2.

"I had watched her run," Cox said. "When they talked about buying her and sending her to us I was like, 'OK.' They

had a plan, looked at some speed figures, it made sense. It's cool because it all came together for them. Great for WinStar."

WinStar's Elliott Walden and David Hanley teamed to buy the filly from Baron Stable, which bought the filly through agent Corbin Blumberg for \$185,000 at the 2024 OBS April sale. She won two of five starts to start her career, all at Fair Grounds, including a 11¾-length win in mid-January going 1 mile in her first attempt around two turns.

"Jerry Brown called me," Walden said of the head of Thoro-Graph. "We had known her from the 2-year-old sale and liked her quite a bit. David and I went back and looked at our notes. She was a gorgeous filly then, so we knew about her and that's when we decided to buy her."

Walden and Cox formulated a plan to give Margie's Intention time between the Crescent City Oaks and her next race, while also avoiding some of the stars of the 3-year-old filly division. The 9-furlong Black-Eyed Susan wound up the immediate goal, and the spot for eight other sophomore fillies.

Sent off as the 5-2 favorite, Margie's Intention stalked early leader Paris Lily through early splits of :22.73, :46.38 and 1:11.57 before making a steady rally through the stretch to win by three-quarters of a length for jockey Flavien Prat. Kinzie Queen wound up third after 1:52.05 on a sloppy track.

Baron Stable, headed by Tom Mueller, has been a partner in major winners National Treasure, Authentic and Justify through Starlight Racing and embraced the chance to team up with WinStar.

"The payday was certainly nice, but I think at the end of the day when you get Elliott Walden and WinStar interested in your horse and you can team up with them, those are guys



Margie's Intention storms to victory in the Black-Eyed Susan Stakes at Pimlico May 16.

you can learn from," said Mueller. "To be partners with them is great."

The dark bay filly means a little more to Mueller, as she's named after his great-aunt Margie Baron Cowley – a devout Catholic who was once asked to pray for a racehorse. The nuns at the Carmelite Convent in Louisville, Ky., suggested praying for "special intentions" instead.

Don't let it be said that the "old" Pimlico went quietly on the final Black-Eyed Susan Day, as a powerful thunderstorm delayed the feature for more than an hour and forced fans from all areas of the track into the first floor of the grandstand, with announcements and warnings on video boards throughout the facility. An EF-1 tornado, with wind speeds of 110 mph, moved through nearby – on a path from Federal Hill to Dundalk – but the racetrack missed the worst of the storm.

Business Woman

Sometimes, you just need the boss to step in.

After watching five stablemates find ways to lose races – or not even run in races – Brittany Russell trainee Bosserati sped to victory in the \$100,000 The Very One Stakes in her 2025 debut for owner/breeder Joel Politi. The 5-year-old mare, a Maryland-bred daughter of Holy Boss and the Twirling Candy mare Candy Striper, blitzed to the front leaving the gate from post two and turned aside all challengers to collect her sixth lifetime win.

And save the day.

The Russell barn, a Maryland leader for several years, opened Black-Eyed Susan Day with a relatively normal second by Saxton in the first race and an undramatic seventh by Ocean City in the seventh. Then things got interesting.



A strong late-afternoon storm Friday forced a delay, sent all patrons to shelter on the first floor of the grandstand and canceled the 14th race.

“I’m not sure I want to remember this day for very long, but I’ll remember Bosserati was there for me. She showed up and she knew I needed her today I guess.”

– *Trainer Brittany Russell*



Maryland-bred Bosserati (2) set every fraction and keeps her head in front in the The Very One Stakes.

Before the eighth, the Allaire duPont Distaff Stakes, Sea Dancer was scratched after misbehaving at the gate. Before the next race, the Hilltop Stakes, Complexity Jane dropped jockey Sheldon Russell, ran off loose and was scratched as well. Adding to the stress, the trainer's husband was shaken up in the chaos and missed the rest of his mounts on the day.

Joel Rosario got on longshot High Paf for the Russells in the Miss Preakness and she finished sixth behind Echo Sound. Next came Bosserati, who picked up Irad Ortiz Jr. and righted the ship.

"It's been a day," said Brittany afterward. "You can't make it up. I'm not sure I want to remember this day for very long, but I'll remember Bosserati was there for me. She showed up and she knew I needed her today I guess."

Bosserati won her debut at Timonium and placed in the Maryland Million Lassie in 2022, but dipped to the \$25,000 claiming level to find her second win in 2023. She won twice more that year, capped by the Stormy Blues Stakes at Laurel in June. Ninth in the 2024 The Very One, she won the Maryland Million Turf Sprint against males and placed in two other stakes last year. The speedster has one tactic and used it in the 5-furlong The Very One – getting the first quarter-mile in :22.45 and the half in :46.21 while facing outside pressure from Accomplished Girl. They stayed that way with Bosserati prevailing by a head in :59.44 over a good turf course. Maryland-bred Gift of Gab, at 17-1, finished third in the 12-horse field.

"She just runs," said Brittany. "Even Irad said, 'Man she was out of there' and I was like, 'Let's go girl.' She just looks down the racetrack. Especially today, I needed that. That's her. Horses are fast or not, that's her game."

– Joe Clancy

Claiming a Special Victory

In July 2024, AJ Suited Racing Stable lost Phileas Fogg via a \$62,500 claim at Saratoga. A little more than two months later, the owner claimed Awesome Aaron for \$40,000 at Churchill Downs. Phileas Fogg won four of his next five starts including two stakes and Awesome Aaron lost his first five before breaking through with a win for his new connections at Oaklawn Park in April.

At Pimlico, the stars aligned to put the horses in the field for the \$250,000 Pimlico Special-G3. Last year's winner and pre-race favorite Pyrenees scratched to leave a field of nine, topped by graded stakes winners Red Route One and Encino. Bettors made Star of Wonder, who carried a 4-for-5 record into his stakes debut, a slight 2-1 favorite over Phileas Fogg, with Awesome Aaron the 7-1 fourth choice in his first stakes try in more than 18 months.

AJ Suited runners past and present hooked up in the stretch, with Awesome Aaron wearing down Phileas Fogg in the final stages to win by three-quarters of a length with John Velazquez aboard. Star of Wonder finished third after 1:56.67



In an important rally for co-owner AJ Suited Racing Stable, Awesome Aaron (left) fights past Phileas Fogg in the Pimlico Special.

for $1\frac{3}{16}$ miles. Co-owned by Turman Racing Stable, Awesome Aaron came in off two strong allowance starts at Oaklawn Park, a second in mid-March and the win in mid-April. Trainer Norm Casse (babysitting at home in Kentucky while wife Gabby Gaudet worked the Preakness for FanDuel TV) and AJ Suited's Justin Nicholson (Sea Island, Ga., golf outing) missed the breakthrough win, but enjoyed it nonetheless.

"He's the one who finds the claims," Casse said of Nicholson. "He does a very good job. He liked the horse. The horse was on his radar for a long time. When they dropped him in at a price we thought was reasonable, we took him."

Casse wasn't thinking graded stakes from the outset, but saw potential and credited the equipment change with at least part of the success.

"Just from day one since we got him, he acted like a really good horse," the trainer said. "It was pretty obvious to me, basically right away, at some point we were going to stretch him out. That was working; he was running really well stretching out, but there was just something missing. So last time we just took the blinkers off and that allowed him to

settle just a little bit more, let him finish a little bit better . . . It's truly a gratifying win. That's a big-time race that anybody would like to win, so we're very proud of that."

— Joe Clancy

Road Tripper

Brendan Walsh and Fergus Galvin entered Play With Fire in a pair of six-figure turf stakes over Preakness Weekend, expecting that she'd most likely stay closer to home and run in Indiana instead of Maryland.

Wet and stormy weather in the Midwest changed those plans and Play With Fire wound up in Baltimore for the \$125,000 Hilltop Stakes. The Minnesota-bred daughter of Oscar Performance made her connections look smart for keeping her in the 1-mile Hilltop versus the rained-off \$150,000 Horseshoe Indianapolis Handicap two days before.

"The weather there was pretty bad, as it was here, so we had to make a decision to go one of the two places," said Galvin, who owns the filly bred by the late Bob Lothenbach's Lothenbach Stables Inc. "We were pleasantly surprised how



Play With Fire makes the trip to Baltimore and glides to victory in the Hilltop Stakes.

good it was out there considering how much rain they had. She does like a pretty good surface. That was fantastic.”

Flavien Prat rode Play With Fire to a 1-length victory over Pretty Lavish (Ire) over the Pimlico course labeled good. Trained by Walsh, Play With Fire improved to 2-for-5 with her first stakes win after finishing third in her stakes debut two starts prior in the Allen “Black Cat” LaCombe Memorial in early March at Fair Grounds.

“It all happened for a reason I suppose,” said Galvin. “Great to have a big win on a big day like this, and my first trip to Pimlico, ironically. Unfortunately, it’ll be the last one.”

NOTES: Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners and Bobby Flay’s Grade 1 winner Candied returned to the winner’s circle for the first time in almost a year with a victory as the even-money favorite in the \$125,000 Allaire duPont Distaff to kick off the stakes portion of the Black-Eyed Susan Day card. The 4-year-old daughter of Candy Ride won by 3 lengths over Dazzling Move under Irad Ortiz Jr. for trainer Todd Pletcher . . . Most of the friends and colleagues of Fergus Galvin stuck around

“That’s a big-time race that anybody would like to win, so we’re very proud of that.”

– *Trainer Norm Casse,
about the Pimlico Special*

in the successive \$150,000 Miss Preakness Stakes-G3 to celebrate with Gabriel “Spider” Duignan after his 3-year-old Echo Town filly Echo Sound rolled to a 2-length victory in the 6-furlong stakes. Trained by Rusty Arnold and ridden by Luis Saez, Echo Sound improved to 4-for-5 in the Miss Preakness, her first start of 2025 and first since the Nov. 30 Fern Creek Stakes at Churchill Downs in which she was second. ■



History Day

ASMUSSEN PULLS IN TWO STAKES WINS ON PREAKNESS UNDERCARD

By Tom Law



Steve Asmussen remembers where he was in December 2013, and no doubt will recall where he was in May 2025.

"This place has been so good to us," Asmussen said in the Pimlico Race Course winner's circle on the latter date. "We drove in this morning thinking about it, telling my mom and dad they're basically supposed to implode the place in June. It's like, 'What?' Is that the age of us?"

Asmussen reflected on the final day of racing in front of Baltimore's iconic but doomed Pimlico grandstand after Booth won the Maryland Sprint Stakes-G3 to kick off a Preakness Day stakes double. And it didn't take the Hall of Fame trainer long to remember a day at another memorable racetrack more than a decade earlier.

He ran Untapable in the Hollywood Starlet-G1 at Hollywood Park Dec. 7, 2013 – two weeks before the track closed for good.

"I was walking through there, looking at every picture and thinking, 'This is not going to be replaced.' That moment I remember so vividly," said Asmussen, a four-time winner of the Preakness weekend trainers' bonus who won the Preakness with Curlin in 2007 and Rachel Alexandra in 2009. "I imagine when you get a little time away from this it'll be similar."

Its racing history all but erased, Hollywood Park became an NFL stadium, home to the Rams and Chargers and host of Super Bowl LVI. That fate doesn't await Pimlico, which will be rebuilt as a new racetrack, even if some of the feelings of finality were the same.

Booth did his part to see the place off with a standout performance.

The 4-year-old son of the Asmussen-trained champion sprinter Mitole went to the front after a slight bobble at the break and controlled the 6-furlong Maryland Sprint throughout. Under the trainer's son Erik Asmussen, Booth won by a length as the 9-10 favorite in the field of five in 1:10.39.

Booth improved to 7-for-11 with his fourth straight win – all in stakes – and padded his bankroll to \$851,191. A half-brother to 2023 Jockey Club Gold Cup Stakes-G1 winner Bright Future and 2024 graded winner Musical Mischief, Booth also won the Whitmore Stakes-G3 and Count Fleet Sprint Handicap-G3 at Oaklawn Park during his streak.

"The horse has had a wonderful spring, and it was nice to see [him win] this weekend and what it means, a wonderful opportunity, Erik's first trip to Maryland, a winning one and to have the family here, it couldn't be any nicer," Asmussen

said. "When he broke well, I was extremely [confident]. With how hard he ran the last three times and then shipping him, I was worried, but then when he broke like that . . . those are some pretty quick horses in there but when he broke like that it was pretty obvious who was going to be on the lead."

A \$225,000 purchase at the 2023 OBS March sale, Booth is co-owned by Bill and Corrine Heiligbrodt, who also campaigned Mitole.

"He's moving up the ladder, making his dad proud," Asmussen said. "He showed a lot early in the fall of his 2-year-old year, just got out of rhythm with things not being ideal and then for him to reach this form, that's four stakes wins in a row at 4."

Asmussen returned to the winner's circle two races later after Stonestreet Stable and Peter Leidel's Zeitlos made a successful return in the \$125,000 Skipat Stakes at 6 furlongs for fillies and mares. Jose Ortiz rode the 5-year-old daughter of Curlin to a 1½-length win over Striker Has Dial, with even-money favorite One Magic Philly another half-length back in third in the field of six.

Zeitlos, off since finishing seventh in the Breeders' Cup Filly and Mare Sprint-G1 at Del Mar, won in 1:11.20.

"A perfect trip; she broke great and put me a lot closer than I thought she would," Ortiz said. "That really helped me a lot. Steve told me she would probably be a little bit sharper today coming off the layoff. She put herself in there without being rushed. She does not like to be rushed. Doing it by herself



Opposite: Booth gets a pat from Erik Asmussen after winning the Maryland Sprint. Above: Zeitlos collects the Skipat.



JEFFREY SNYDER

JIM DULEY

Fort Washington (above) and Pennsylvania-bred Witty put on shows in turf stakes victories on the Preakness undercard.

allowed her to be a lot more patient and I was ready to go whenever I wanted to.”

Zeitlos improved to 9-for-18 with \$1,116,305 in earnings after the Skipat.

A four-time stakes winner last season, including the Thoroughbred Club of America Stakes-G2 at Keeneland before the Breeders’ Cup, Zeitlos will work toward another run at Del Mar this fall.

“This was the perfect spot to start her season,” Asmussen said. “She’s as fast as ever, if not faster . . . She’s all class. Huge win. We obviously want to get back to the Breeders’ Cup with her. We’ll work from there backwards. We started a little later this year so we can be stronger at the end.”

Making Reservations

Shug McGaughey knows plenty about the Dinner Party Stakes-G3.

He came into the third Saturday in May with five victories in the signature Preakness Day turf stakes, going all the way back to Hall of Famer Lure in 1993. McGaughey, a Hall of Famer himself, made it a half-dozen when Magic Cap Stables’ Fort Washington overtook Trihari at the top of the stretch



and held off Cash Equity (Fr) late to win the \$250,000 turf stakes by a length.

Junior Alvarado rode the 6-year-old son of War Front, who won the 9-furlong event in 1:55.08 over a good course.

McGaughey, his assistant Anthony Hamilton and Magic Cap’s Joe Anzalone of Boca Raton, Fla., zeroed in on the Dinner Party after his most recent start and win in the Canadian Turf Stakes-G3 at Gulfstream Park March 1.

“We had this circled pretty much right after the race in Florida,” Hamilton said. “We’ve been pointing to this. He had a good campaign last year and we’re excited to be here.”

Anzalone agreed, calling the Dinner Party his biggest win as an owner. He purchased Fort Washington for \$260,000 at the 2023 Fasig-Tipton Kentucky July horses of racing age sale. Joe Allen, who co-bred the horse out of Azaelia (Fr), a daughter of Irish-bred stallion Turtle Bowl, with Peter Brant’s White Birch Farm, stayed in as an owner originally. Magic Cap took sole ownership after an eighth in a Churchill Downs turf allowance May 9, 2024, and enjoyed immediate success when he dead-heated for the win in the Monmouth Stakes-G3 about a month later.

“It’s been nothing but up from there,” Anzalone said. “He’s really solid. He comes out every time and tries his hardest. Never see a clunker. A lot of heart, love the horse.”

In addition to Lure, Fort Washington joined McGaughey’s other Dinner Party (or Dixie Stakes as it was known until 2020) winners Never Explain (2023), Fire Away (2018), Ironicus (2015) and Parading (2009). The dark bay improved to 6-for-26 and boosted his bankroll to \$724,922 in Pimlico’s oldest stakes.



EQUI-PHOTO, INC.

In the Gallorette, Charlene's Dream wins her first graded stakes – in her first try – for trainer Ed Moger Jr.

“He’s just coming into his own at 6,” Anzalone said. “That’s what they say about War Fronts; as they get older they get better. That’s him. He’s found it now. It means a lot, it’s special. I understand Shug has the most wins in the Dinner Party . . . Shug’s been really good to me and so has Anthony Hamilton. He is a really good friend and he’s the one that got me involved with Shug.”

For Hamilton, whose first racing job was with trainer Frannie Campitelli at Pimlico and whose stepfather Jim McCue is the Maryland track photographer, the win felt like a homecoming.

“Jim’s taking my picture, friends are watching, we went out to dinner last night and bumped into some people, my first summer job was here when I was 16 so it’s special,” he said. “It’s always nice to win races, being back home and winning here and knowing that this is it and it’s never going to be like this again, I’m a nostalgic, sentimental person. The history of this sport means a lot to me.”

Just in Time

A year after finishing second in the Jim McKay Turf Sprint, where he led late but got caught in the final yards, Pennsylvania-bred Witty rallied from far back early to drop a bomb on six rivals in the \$125,000 turf sprint.

Bred, trained and co-owned by Lizzie Merryman, Witty steadied leaving the gate and gave his rivals a 3-furlong head start as Honeyquist and favorite Coppola traded punches on the lead. After a first quarter in :21.91, Witty was 11½ lengths

behind and looked like a horse trying to find a rhythm as he unfurled strides that were somehow long and choppy at the same time.

Still last at the top of the stretch, the dapple gray erased some deficit and looked like he was in line for a minor award. Jockey Flavien Prat sent the 6-year-old Great Notion gelding inside Fore Harp and Mattingly and took aim at the quarter across the track in front. In the six path and rolling outside horses, Witty went from fifth to first in about a dozen strides and drew off to win by 3¼ lengths with his ears pricked. No Nay Hudson (Ire) finished second with Virginia-bred Determined Kingdom third. The winner needed :59.61 to cover 5 furlongs and collect his 10th win (to go with 11 seconds and a third) in 31 starts.

A half-brother to Grade 1 turf sprinter Caravel, Witty pushed his career earnings to \$801,782 and provided a first Preakness Day training win for Merryman on her birthday.

“There’s such family history here,” she said afterward. “My parents, all the hard work that goes into it. It’s the real deal. I remember watching Secretariat win in the same box we sit in now. I’m sure I was here as a baby.”

One of five winners produced from the Congrats mare Zeezee Zoomzoom, Witty made his first 21 starts (including six stakes wins) in Merryman’s silks. Over dinner in Baltimore the night after the 2024 McKay she sold half to Qatar Racing and Marc Detampel, who teamed up to campaign Caravel (after Merryman had sold her) to victory in the Breeders’ Cup Turf Sprint-G1.

“That’s him, he always comes from way off the pace. There was a ton of speed in the race so I expected him to be way behind.”

– *Trainer Lizzie Merryman,
about Jim McKay winner Witty*

“This one’s special because we had Caravel, the older sister who is very special,” said Detampel. “To see Witty perform like this on this stage in a very tough race . . . it’s nice that he gave them 16 lengths at the beginning so he could make it more special.”

Merryman is somewhat used to the running style, not that it’s stress free.

“That’s him, he always comes from way off the pace. There was a ton of speed in the race so I expected him to be way behind,” she said. “You never know, it was a long ways back. Flavien said that turning for home he thought he’d get a piece of it and all of a sudden he was 4 [lengths] in front.”

– *Joe Clancy*

Graded Stakes Dreaming

Trainer Ed Moger Jr. spent much of 2024 trying to find a graded stakes for his Texas-bred filly Charlene’s Dream, only to have her not make the final entries because – wait for it – she didn’t have graded stakes earnings.

That should no longer be a problem.

The 4-year-old daughter of Qurbaan made the program for the \$150,000 Gallorette-G3 and then made everybody look foolish – carving out soft early fractions and rolling late to score by 3¼ lengths at 8-1.

“I’ve always thought she was the best filly I’ve ever had and now she’s 5 out of 8; she’s a very, very talented horse,” said Moger, who spent his early career in Washington state and northern California before moving to Kentucky last year. “We couldn’t get her in any graded stakes basically because she’d never been in a graded stakes. We entered in three of them. We didn’t get in, we weren’t qualified; that’s why we came here. I’ve always thought she could run like that.”

With Preakness winner Umberto Rispoli aboard, Charlene’s Dream made every call in the Gallorette and led

by at least 1½ lengths throughout. Moger loved the early fractions and all but started heading for the winner’s circle.

“I didn’t think she’d get it that easily,” he said of the lead. “I thought there were a couple that had speed and when they went by and everybody was strangling off of her, I said, ‘You know what, they aren’t going to be able to catch her.’”

Moger spent \$35,000 to buy the Gallorette winner at the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic 2-year-old sale in 2023 – after she sold for \$22,000 as a short yearling at Keeneland January and \$35,000 as a yearling at Keeneland September. Owned by the Domeyko Taylor partnership, Charlene’s Dream backed up the Gallorette win with a second in the Old Forester Mint Julep Stakes-G3 at Churchill Downs June 1.

– *Joe Clancy*

NOTES: **Crudo** put his name in the mix for a run at the final jewel of the 2025 Triple Crown series with a dominating victory in the \$100,000 Spendthrift Farm Sir Barton Stakes. Under John Velazquez, the 3-year-old son of Justify went to the front early and stayed there on the way to a 7½-length victory for owners Bobby Flay and James Ventura and trainer Todd Pletcher. Crudo won the 1¼-mile Sir Barton less than a month after breaking his maiden by 7¼ lengths going about 7 furlongs at Keeneland. He returned three weeks after the Sir Barton to finish last of eight and 19½ lengths behind Sovereignty in the Belmont Stakes-G1 at Saratoga Race Course after contesting the early paced with Rodriguez. . . Trainer **Cherie DeVaux** doubled on the day with her only starters, picking up the Chick Lang with Retribution and the James Murphy with Reagan’s Wit. An \$87,000 yearling purchase by Belladonna Racing, which added several partners to the racing ownership, Retribution won for the second time in three starts while rallying from fifth early to win the \$150,000 sprint stakes for 3-year-olds at 9-1. Three-year-old turf horse Reagan’s Wit collected his first stakes win in the \$100,000 Murphy at a mile as the 1-2 favorite. The son of Authentic took over from Curahee in the stretch and pulled away late to win by 3¼ lengths – his second win in five lifetime starts . . . With seconds in the Black-Eyed Susan, Gallorette and Preakness, plus a win in the Hilltop with Play With Fire, trainer **Brendan Walsh** took home the \$50,000 trainer prize from 1/ST Racing with 37 total points. Asmussen was six points back in second, worth \$25,000, followed by Brad Cox. To be eligible, trainers had to run at least five horses in stakes over the weekend with points accumulating based on performance. **Mike Trombetta** won the top prize (\$25,000) for points accumulated in non-stakes races on the weekend, edging Brittany Russell 24-21 . . . Total **Preakness Day** handle reached \$110,043,794, an increase from \$98,858,918 bet in 2024. ■

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Wild Ride

MAY 2-YEAR-OLD SALE OVERCOMES
OBSTACLES TO SET RECORDS

By Joe Clancy ■ Fasig-Tipton Photos

Years – maybe decades – from now, people will talk about being at the 2025 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic May 2-year-old sale. If you want to make sure, ask them what time the last horse went through the ring.

Hip 586, a Lexingtonian filly with a kite-shaped star between her eyes, stepped from the back walking ring into the pavilion proper at 10:04 p.m. – more than 12 hours into the longest one-day horse sale in American history. That final filly, sold at 10:06 for \$19,000 by Crane Thoroughbreds to Jeff Heslep, capped a day that felt like a week and a week that felt like a month. By the time Fasig-Tipton added up the returns, the sale produced a record \$44,317,500 in gross sales, an average of \$135,528 and a median of \$60,000 on 327 horses sold. Four horses brought \$1 million or more. Twenty-one went for at least \$500,000.

Nobody would have predicted that early in a week that tested humans and equines at the Timonium, Md., facility. Heavy rain soaked the track, forced several delays (by hours and days) to the under-tack show and ultimately canceled timed workouts. Some horses with early spots on the schedule breezed; others galloped; some open-galloped. One, a Practical Joke filly, suffered a catastrophic breakdown while galloping out.

All of it nearly shut down the whole show, spurred heaps of debate over the value of fast-as-they-can-go pre-sale breezes, and compressed the sale into one day from two.

“It was just, literally from start to finish, it was a marathon from the time the first horse went on the racetrack Wednesday morning compared to Tuesday morning to the last horse sold after 10 o’clock on Tuesday night,” said Fasig-Tipton’s Boyd Browning. “It’s about as stretched out a week as you can imagine from everybody’s perspective, but we’re just elated with the overall results, elated for our sellers that they hung in there. It wasn’t any fun for anybody over the last week.”

Browning credited Fasig-Tipton staffers, consignors who rolled with the punches, buyers who did the additional work, and horses who stood out under trying circumstances.

“They provide us the opportunity to sell quality horses,” he said of the consignors. “We take that responsibility very, very seriously. We had some difficult decisions to



The sales-topping Girvin filly stretches through her breeze on a sloppy track at Timonium before bringing \$1.1 million.



make along the way, and they were supportive of the decisions that we made and helped present their product in the best foot and the most favorable light that they could. To the buyers' credit, they came in and evaluated the horses. Obviously, it's the first time it's ever been a sale of this nature in terms of a combination of horses that breezed on a sealed racetrack, and then were untimed on Sunday with basically half the catalog or 45 percent of the catalog – extraordinary circumstances, and at the end of the day, an extraordinary sale."

Wavertree Stables sold the sales-topper, a Girvin filly purchased by Kerri Radcliffe for Memo Racing and Amo Racing for \$1.1 million. Bred by Twin Oaks Bloodstock, the Kentucky-bred cost Havertz Stables \$240,000 at Keeneland

September and was considered for an earlier sale before she turned into a pinhooking triumph at Timonium.

"The Girvin filly had a little setback in the spring, and we decided to just wait, give her the time instead of rushing her for April," said Wavertree's Ciaran Dunne. "She rewarded us for it. She's a big two-turn filly. Sometimes you're rewarded in this business for doing the right thing. I think we did do the right thing with her and give her the time. And hopefully, she's as lucky for the buyers that she was for us."

Radcliffe called the dark bay the "best filly in the sale," connected two clients to land her and expected her to join the barn of trainer Chad Brown. The half-sister to two winners from the family of graded/group winner and sire Chimes



Looking sharp while galloping, a Violence colt fetched more than \$1 million from agent Donato Lanni.

SALES LEADERS

Fillies

- \$1,100,000.** Dk.b./br.f. Girvin—Scarlet Dixie, by Broken Vow (Ky.); Wavertree Stables (Ciaran Dunne), agt. VII; Memo Racing & AMO Racing, Kerri Radcliffe/Alex Elliott, agt.
- \$650,000.** Ch.f. Curlin—Tin Type Gal, by Tapit (Ky.); Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds agt.; Saints Or Sinners & Dan & Tanya Freeman.
- \$525,000.** B.f. Into Mischief—Divine Elegance, by Uncle Mo (Ky.); De Meric Sales agt.; Colts Neck Stable.
- \$525,000.** B.f. McKinzie—Paulownia, by Quiet American (Ky.); Caliente Thoroughbreds agt.; Sarah Kelly, Donato Lanni, agt.
- \$500,000.** B.f. Charlatan—Sweet Shirley Mae, by Broken Vow (Ky.); Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds agt.; Tom Durant.
- \$500,000.** Ch.f. Curlin—Embur's Song, by Unbridled's Song (Ky.); Julie Davies agt.; Gargan Racing Agent Jones/Everett.

Colts

- \$1,050,000.** Ch.c. Violence—A Taste of Red, by Street Boss (Ky.); Top Line Sales LLC, agt. III; Zedan Racing, Donato Lanni, agt.
- \$1,000,000.** B.c. Into Mischief—Quick Flip, by Speightstown (Ky.); King's Equine agt.; Mahmud Mouni.
- \$1,000,000.** Ch.c. Nyquist—Deja Vu, by Giant's Causeway (Ky.); Wavertree Stables (Ciaran Dunne), agt. I; Mayberry Farm.
- \$975,000.** Dk.b./br.c. Constitution—Chic, by Orb (Ky.); Grade One Investments, agt. II; Marquee Bloodstock agt.
- \$975,000.** B.c. Uncle Mo—Gaelic Tales, by Giant's Causeway (Ky.); Top Line Sales, agt. VII; Gus King.
- \$825,000.** B.c. Uncle Mo—Fulcrum, by Not This Time (Ky.); De Meric Sales agt.; McMahon & Hill/Fergus Galvin/Spenththrift Farm.
- \$775,000.** B.c. Maxfield—Kathballu, by Bluegrass Cat (Ky.); Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds agt.; RRR.
- \$775,000.** Gr./ro.c. Speightstown—Dos Vinos, by Twirling Candy (Ky.); Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds agt.; Arroyo Bloodstock.

- \$775,000.** B.c. Tiz the Law—Janis's Joy, by Broken Vow (Ky.); Wavertree Stables (Ciaran Dunne), agt. V; Mayberry Farm.
- \$700,000.** B.c. Galilean—It's Timeless, by Mineshaft (N.Y.); Wavertree Stables (Ciaran Dunne), agt. IX; Mahmud Mouni.
- \$700,000.** Dk.b./br.c. Yaupon—Frosty Margarita, by Frost Giant (N.Y.); Grassroots Training and Sales, agt.; Mahmud Mouni.
- \$650,000.** B.c. Justify—Take a Memo, by Empire Maker (Ky.); SBM Training and Sales, agt.; Marquee Bloodstock, agt.
- \$600,000.** Ch.c. Nyquist—Weekend Away, by Malibu Moon (Ky.); Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds agt.; Mark Davis, Steve Rothblum, agt.
- \$500,000.** B.c. Practical Joke—Honor and Praise, by Uncle Mo (Ky.); Top Line Sales agent XII; Case Clay Thoroughbred Management.
- \$500,000.** B.c. Yaupon—Just Jenda, by Menifee (N.Y.); SGV Thoroughbreds (Steven Venosa) agt.; Justin Casse for MV Magnier.

Band breezed a furlong in :10.20 before timed workouts were canceled. Named Ornellaia (ash tree in Italian and also a high-end wine producer) by her new owners, she breezed three times at Saratoga in June.

Speaking for all the gallopers, a Violence colt sold for \$1.05 million to check in second on the scoreboard. Hip 544 sold for \$280,000 at Keeneland September, so also turned into a solid pinhook return from the consignment of Top Line Sales. Bred by Nasser Omihira, the chestnut didn't produce a timed breeze, but put on a show while galloping two days before selling. Agent Donato Lanni, bidding for Zedan Racing, outran several rivals including international agent Mahmud Mouni to get the long-striding Kentucky-bred.

"We love this horse," said Lanni. "He sold himself, and he's just a specimen of a horse. He's a magnificent-looking horse. He's beautiful. He's beautiful. It's hard to find a horse that looks like that. He truly galloped. We knew the horse. We've seen his work at the farm. He's just a beautiful horse."

The colt, a half-brother to stakes-placed Microcap and from the family of graded winners Saint Anddan, Gretzky the Great, Luftikus, Tower of Texas, Street Sounds and others was destined for trainer Bob Baffert.

Top Line's Tori Gladwell would have appreciated a chance to breeze, but also understood the circumstances.

"He was in a pinhooking package with a couple of our guys, and they're ecstatic," she said. "They're ecstatic, but I'm disappointed at heart because I know that's the type of horse

that if you could really, really show him off, he should bring more than that. I feel like those top buyers that are really looking for those three best horses of the year, like Zedan, they need the breeze show. They're not going to be able to find those top, top colts and spend the \$2 million, \$3 million, \$4 million if we don't have a breeze show."

Top Line could have withdrawn the colt in favor of a later sale, and likely dry track, in Florida but stuck with the plan.

"I'm not going to complain with the million dollars," she said. "That was great. That was four times our money. Who goes to say if we bring him to OBS, he doesn't chip an ankle? If we can get that for him here and know he's 100 percent sound . . . that's why we went ahead and sold him."

Mouni, shopping for Libyan clients who plan to race in the United States, was part of a strong group of international buyers and went to \$1 million for an Into Mischief colt from Spendthrift Farm and consignor King's Equine. Hip 334 breezed a furlong in :10.20. The bay colt is out of the stakes-winning Speightstown mare Quick Flip, dam of five winners including Grade 2 winner Following Sea.

The colt nearly stayed with his breeder.

"We actually had several people lined up that were interested in partnering, and we were going to stay in for a piece," said Spendthrift's Ned Toffey. "But that's great money for a horse. I think sometimes you have to use the sales ring to value them. We would have been thrilled to stay in and had several parties that had talked to us about doing just that, but when

PINHOOKERS' SCORECARD

Horses who sold for \$250,000 or more, and exceeded their previous auction selling prices by at least \$100,000:

\$1,100,000. Dk.b./br.f. Girvin—Scarlet Dixie, by Broken Vow. *kee sept 24 \$240,000*

\$1,050,000. Ch.c. Violence—A Taste of Red, by Street Boss. *kee sept 24 \$280,000*

\$1,000,000. Ch.c. Nyquist—Deja Vu, by Giant's Causeway. *kee sept 24 \$200,000*

\$975,000. Dk.b./br.c. Constitution—Chic, by Orb. *ftk oct 24 \$175,000*

\$975,000. B.c. Uncle Mo—Gaelic Tales, by Giant's Causeway. *kee sept 24 \$325,000*

\$825,000. B.c. Uncle Mo—Fulcrum, by Not This Time. *ftk oct 24 \$250,000*

\$775,000. B.c. Maxfield—Kathballu, by Bluegrass Cat. *kee sept 24 \$250,000*

\$775,000. B.c. Tiz the Law—Janis's Joy, by Broken Vow. *kee sept 24 \$95,000*

\$700,000. Dk.b./br.c. Yaupon—Frosty Margarita, by Frost Giant. *ft feb dig 25 \$250,000*

\$700,000. B.c. Galilean—It's Timeless, by Mineshaft. *ftn aug pref 24 \$95,000*

\$650,000. Ch.f. Curlin—Tin Type Gal, by Tapit. *ftk oct 24 \$110,000*

\$650,000. B.c. Justify—Take a Memo, by Empire Maker. *ftk oct 24 \$350,000*

\$600,000. Ch.c. Nyquist—Weekend Away, by Malibu Moon. *kee nov 23 \$200,000*

\$525,000. B.f. McKinzie—Paulownia, by Quiet American. *ftk oct 24 \$247,000*

\$525,000. B.f. Into Mischief—Divine Elegance, by Uncle Mo. *kee sept 24 \$190,000*

\$500,000. B.f. Charlatan—Sweet Shirley Mae, by Broken Vow. *kee sept 24 \$350,000*

\$500,000. B.c. Yaupon—Just Jenda, by Menifee. *kee sept 24 \$130,000*

\$500,000. Ch.f. Curlin—Embur's Song, by Unbridled's Song. *kee sept 24 \$140,000*

\$500,000. B.c. Practical Joke—Honor and Praise, by Uncle Mo. *kee sept 24 \$265,000*

\$450,000. Dk.b./br.c. Nyquist—Majestic Vixen, by Majesticperfection. *kee sept 24 \$55,000*

\$440,000. Dk.b./br.c. Uncle Mo—Floral Park, by Forest Wildcat. *kee sept 24 \$160,000*

\$425,000. B.c. Bolt d'Oro—Sail On, by Into Mischief. *ftn aug 24 \$250,000*

\$400,000. Gr./ro.c. Liam's Map—Flummoxed, by Outwork. *ftk oct 24 \$200,000*

\$350,000. Gr./ro.f. Yaupon—Lake Como, by Salt Lake. *ftk july 24 \$90,000*

\$350,000. Dk.b./br.f. Blame—Collections Choice, by Bernardini. *kee sept 24 \$22,000*

\$350,000. B.f. Practical Joke—Fashion Island, by Medaglia d'Oro. *kee sept 24 \$65,000*

\$345,000. Dk.b./br.c. Not This Time—Bonneville Flats, by Flat Out. *ftk oct 24 \$160,000*

\$310,000. Dk.b./br.f. Modernist—Ascot Walk, by Daaher. *ftm oct 24 \$37,000*

\$300,000. B.c. Honor A. P.—Settle'n Speight, by Speightstown. *kee sept 24 \$30,000*

\$300,000. Ch.f. Vekoma—Brewster Flats, by Mineshaft. *kee sept 24 \$70,000*

\$300,000. Dk.b./br.c. Justify—Sweet Dreams, by Candy Ride (Arg). *kee sept 24 \$150,000*

\$300,000. Dk.b./br.c. Maclean's Music—Hollywood Hills, by Hoorayforhollywood. *kee sept 24 \$170,000*

\$285,000. Ch.f. Practical Joke—Kitten Empress, by Kitten's Joy. *ftk july 24 \$120,000*

\$270,000. Ch.c. Violence—Will She, by Wando. *kee sept 24 \$135,000*

\$250,000. B.f. Midnight Lute—Victoria's Hope, by Run Away and Hide. *ftk oct 24 \$65,000*



Wet surfaces in the paddock and on the track hampered scheduling of the under-tack show.

somebody comes in and wants to bid a million dollars, it's hard to say no."

The colt was one of five Mouni purchased for Tagermeen Racing, which planned to send horses to top trainers before potentially racing in the Middle East. Via telephone, the group encouraged Mouni to land the \$1 million colt.

"They pushed me to bid, to continue, to not stop until we get it," said Mouni. "The horses will stay here but the trainer we have not decided yet. Maybe Todd Pletcher or Steve Asmussen . . . At the end of the year, they will maybe travel to Dubai or Saudi Arabia. It depends on the performances."

All five of Mouni's purchases, including two \$700,000 colts in addition to the Into Mischief, had timed workouts. The group also included a \$75,000 Blame colt bred in Virginia by Chris Gracie and Greg Kilka.

Wavertree consigned the sale's first seven-figure horse when Hip 79 brought \$1 million from buyer Mayberry Farm, a mark that stood for hours until Hip 334 tied it and Hip 368 topped everyone. The early success was a sign of things to come for Wavertree, as the Florida farm put four horses among the top 11 and led all consignors with \$5,357,000 in gross sales from 15 sold.

"I guess we were fortunate that most of ours got to breeze before there wasn't a breeze show, but by the same token, they were nice horses," said Dunne near the end of the sale. "I think they would have sold well anyway. We've got to credit the guys who are buying them, give them a little more credit than we normally might. You can't hide a good one. The

THE NUMBERS

TWO-YEAR FIGURES

	2025	2024
Offered	430	414
Sold	327	345
Not sold	23.9%	16.7%
Gross	\$44,317,500	\$32,921,500
Average	\$135,528 (+42.0%)	\$95,425
Median	\$60,000	\$50,000

LEADING BUYERS

Mahmud Mouni (5).....	\$2,765,000
Mayberry Farm (2)	1,775,000
Marquee Bloodstock, agt. (2)	1,625,000
Repole Stable (5).....	1,290,000
RRR (2)	1,175,000
Tropical Racing (6).....	1,110,000
Memo Racing & Amo Racing USA (Kerri Radcliffe/Alex Elliott, agt.) (1).....	1,100,000
Donato Lanni, agt. (1)	1,050,000
Gus King (1).....	975,000
Mark Davis (Steve Rothblum, agt.) (3).....	920,000

LEADING SIRES

Gross Sales

Yaupon (14).....	\$2,811,000
Nyquist (6).....	2,540,000
Uncle Mo (4)	2,530,000
Vekoma (8)	1,580,000
Into Mischief (2).....	1,525,000
Charlatan (9)	1,422,000
Violence (2)	1,320,000
Curlin (3).....	1,230,000
Practical Joke (5)	1,204,000
Constitution (3).....	1,200,000

Average Sales (3 or more sold)

Uncle Mo (4)	\$632,500
Nyquist (6).....	423,333
Curlin (3).....	410,000
Constitution (3).....	400,000
Maxfield (3).....	303,667
Justify (4).....	296,250
McKinzie (3).....	260,000
Not This Time (3)	256,667
Practical Joke (5)	240,800
Tapit (3).....	201,667

LEADING CONSIGNORS

Gross Sales

Wavertree Stables (15)	\$5,357,000
Hartley/DeRenzo Thoroughbreds (7).....	3,910,000
Top Line Sales (7)	3,030,000
De Meric Sales (14)	2,744,000
Julie Davies (17).....	2,077,000
King's Equine (9)	1,755,000
Grassroots Training and Sales (16).....	1,689,000
Scanlon Training & Sales (5).....	1,500,000
Randy Miles (8)	1,330,000
Tom McCrocklin (12).....	1,236,000

Average (3 or more sold)

Hartley/DeRenzo Thoroughbreds (7).....	\$558,571
Top Line Sales (7)	432,857
Wavertree Stables (15).....	357,133
Scanlon Training & Sales (5)	300,000
Grade One Investments (4)	280,000
SGV Thoroughbreds (4)	230,000
Paul Sharp (5).....	203,000
De Meric Sales (14)	196,000
King's Equine (9).....	195,000
Caliente Thoroughbreds (5).....	179,400



Compressed to one day, the sale went well into the night and put a new covered outdoor walking ring to good use.

only thing that is for sure in this business is you can't hide a good horse."

Dunne said his Nyquist colt, Hip 79, was always destined for Timonium to separate him from some others by the sire at the farm. The Maryland sale's mid-May date helped the Girvin filly develop into a sales-topper. Colts by Tiz the Law (bought by Mayberry) and Galilean (Mouni) also topped \$700,000 to bolster the big returns.

"It's been a day of days," Dunne said. "We're just glad that it went our way. The Tiz the Law is a beautiful horse. The Galilean is a smashing horse. They were just a good group of horses, and we really felt they were. It's nice when everybody else agrees."

Like every Timonium consignor, Dunne dealt with the shifting schedule as best he could and credited Fasig-Tipton with staying the course.

"Under the circumstances, I think Fasig made every right call, and they've done everything they can to accommodate us," he said. "The buyers were understanding with the situation. The credit goes to everybody. As consignors, when you've got your livelihood that comes down to one day and

the rules change, it can be a little off-putting, but in fairness, everybody handled it really well."

Lanni, an active bidder all day who signed for two horses at \$1.05 million and \$525,000, agreed with Dunne's assessment.

"This is going to be a sale where you're going to say to yourself, 'I remember when I was there,' " he said. "It was a crazy night. The Fasig boys have done a great job with what was handed to them. I applaud their perseverance and doing a great job. It's not easy to call the shots like that with weather."

Wrung out and fighting off tears in his post-sale interview, Browning said he and the rest of the Fasig-Tipton team just tried to make good decisions in the moments while prioritizing the needs of horses, buyers and sellers.

"The people that work in this company care about the horses and our customers, and I hope that was evident this week," he said with a mix of pride and relief. "This wasn't about setting records. This was about perseverance. I think that we and our customers persevered . . . What we do is not rocket science. There's no rocket science. We're not heart

surgeons or brain surgeons or fancy lawyers or anything like that. We're just regular men and women trying to do the very best job we can every day – take good care of our customers, try to be fair, try to do the right thing."

Galloping vs. Breezing

The shifting landscape of the under-tack show spurred opinions in all directions, but wound up inconclusive at best.

Eight gallopers sold for \$500,000 or more. Major owner/breeder Mike Repole, critical of high-pressure timed breezes at juvenile sales, sent representatives to Timonium because of the changes and bought five horses for \$1.29 million. All galloped.

"That's the reason we came," said Ed Rosen, on the grounds with Repole advisors Jacob West, Madison Scott and Alex Solis II. "Mike's been a strong advocate for gallops at the 2-year-old sales so when they announced that they were going to gallop, the team came. Mike puts his money where his mouth is, and so we became buyers. We were happy to be able to support what he believes in."

Team Repole reviewed video of the training sessions and following up with on-site inspections, pedigree analysis and other homework. Repole bought a \$425,000 Maclean's Music colt, a \$310,000 New York-bred filly by Modernist, a \$285,000 Not This Time filly and a \$210,000 New York-bred Candy Ride (Arg) colt. A \$60,000 Tacitus colt, bred in Colorado, completed the group.

TWO-YEAR BID DISTRIBUTION

	2025			2024	
	<i>bid</i>	<i>no. sold</i>	<i>total amount</i>	<i>no. sold</i>	<i>total amount</i>
≥	\$500,000	21	\$15,600,000	7	\$ 4,600,000
≥	100,000	94	19,565,000	99	19,750,000
≥	75,000	34	2,742,000	21	1,715,000
≥	50,000	60	3,449,000	48	2,794,000
≥	25,000	58	2,114,500	79	2,838,000
≥	10,000	50	774,000	69	1,101,000
≥	5,000	10	73,000	13	95,500
	others			9	28,000

Rosen appreciated the variety available, and the chance to work a sale he normally doesn't.

"We only looked at the horses who galloped," he said. "I haven't separated out the average of the gallopers, but just sitting in there, it looked like they sold well. They're having a great sale. I don't think it deterred anybody. If anything, it brought in people like us."

More International Flavor

Buyers from the Middle East and beyond helped push the 2024 sale, and were back in force this year thanks to Fasig-Tipton's recruiting efforts, the dirt track at Timonium and the multi-faceted catalog. In addition to Mouni, trainer Bhupat Seemar bought for several clients including purchases

Under-tack rules changed for 2026

Fasig-Tipton announced July 1 that it would change the format of the under-tack show at next year's sale. Centered around eliminating timed workouts and restricting whip use, the changes are designed to better reflect the natural athleticism of the horses, and attract a wider pool of buyers.

All under-tack show performances will be untimed; Fasig-Tipton will not officially clock breezes. Use of the riding crop will be restricted; riders may carry a crop for safety purposes but may not strike horses during workouts.

"These changes reflect our commitment to improving our 2-year-old sales process," said Fasig-Tipton President Boyd Browning in a news release. "We believe buyer focus has skewed too heavily toward stopwatch-based evaluations. This approach is intended to restore balance – emphasizing how a horse moves and presents itself on the track."

The modifications are also designed with long-term strategy in mind: to welcome a broader spectrum of buyers.

"By focusing less on clock-driven evaluations and removing whip use, we believe we can create a more accessible and horse-first sales environment," Browning said. "Our aim is to better serve traditional buyers while also welcoming new owners, trainers, and end-users who are interested in acquiring horses that are physically ready and mentally sound for the racetrack."

The decision was based in part on an unplanned but revealing trial during the 2025 sale. Severe weather prompted the company to adjust the final day of the under tack show to untimed gallops and breezes. The response was overwhelmingly positive.

"It became an unexpected case study," said Browning. "Not only did the show present well visually, but the horses came out of their workouts in excellent condition – and the feedback from leading buyers and consignors was extremely supportive."

The 2026 sale will take place May 18-19 in Timonium, Md., following the Preakness Stakes at Laurel Park.

of \$775,000 (a Maxfield colt) and \$400,000 (a Gun Runner colt) for RRR.

“We were more looking for horses who breezed just because coming so far and trying to take them away across the sea,” said Seemar, who trains from a base in Dubai. “It had to be those horses because we could differentiate what’s got more talent than not. We’re paying the cost to fly them over, so we have to do the homework.”

Seemar bought Group 3 winner Mendelssohn Bay for \$85,000 at Timonium in 2023, and made his third trip this year. Dubai’s points pathway to the Kentucky Derby helps entice buyers to shop for future 3-year-old standouts and Fasig-Tipton’s extra effort does the rest.

“They have great hospitality, they take care of you, and they basically just give you baby steps to come here,” said Seemar. “I’ve worked in America, so I know what it’s like to be here, but I guess a lot of other people are coming here for the first time. For them, Fasig-Tipton has done a fantastic job attracting people.”

Seemar singled out the Maxfield colt, purchased from Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds, as an ideal prospect.

“He’s just a perfectly balanced, beautifully made colt and had a good breeze,” Seemar said. “And he comes from a great consignment. We bought Reynaldtothewizard [trained to major wins by Seemar’s uncle Satish Seemar] from them a few years ago. That helps, absolutely. Plus this is the only sale that’s on the dirt so what you see is what you get. It’s different

when you’re on a different surface and you take them back home and put them on the dirt and then you think, ‘What’s going on here?’ ”

International buyers don’t bid on every horse, but they help push the sale and its overall returns. For consignors, the more buyers – and more diverse buyers – the better.

“That’s all credit to Fasig because I think that they’ve really worked that angle hard,” said Dunne. “They’ve got them over here.”

For Browning and other sales staff, the foreign component to Timonium is a payoff for hard work from a variety of people including Michael Adolphson and Anna Seitz.

“The levels we received from international buyers was good last year, and it was exceptional this year,” said Browning. “I think that we clearly carved out a niche in the market. Once again, it’s not magic. It’s going over there, making contacts, working, trying to be accessible . . . We’re very appreciative of the folks who made the trip.”

NOTES: Several regional-breds reached six figures, including a New Jersey-bred Uncle Lino colt at \$200,000. Bred by Gina and Kelly Lupton, the chestnut out of the El Padrino mare Padrinoneverquits was purchased by the Dubai-based Suited and Booted . . . A Virginia-bred Vekoma filly also went for \$200,000 on a bid by Colts Neck Stables. She was bred by Gerard Lopez . . . A colt from the first crop of Maryland sire Engage bred by Maria Haire sold for \$120,000 to Jeff Macker. ■

Ten-year figures for 2-year-old sale

Year	Gross	Average	Sold	Buy-back %	Sales topper
2025	\$44,317,500	\$135,528	327	23.9	\$1,100,000, dk.b./br.f. Girvin—Scarlet Dixie, by Broken Vow; consigned by Wavertree Stables (Ciaran Dunne), agent VII; purchased by Memo Racing & Amo Racing, Kerri Radcliffe/Alex Elliott, agent.
2024	\$32,921,500	\$95,425	345	16.7	\$1,250,000, b.f. Bolt d’Oro—Werewolf, by Arch; consigned by Wavertree Stables (Ciaran Dunne), agent; purchased by Winchell Thoroughbreds.
2023	\$34,795,500	\$92,788	375	14.2	\$1,000,000 Nuit Magique, ch.f. Arrogate—Twixy, by Mutakddim; consigned by Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds, agent; purchased by Kerri Radcliffe, agent.
2022	\$37,297,700	\$95,391	391	18.9	\$3,550,000* Hejazi, dk.b./br.c. Bernardini—G Note, by Medaglia d’Oro; consigned by Chester and Mary Broman, Sequel Bloodstock, agent; purchased by Zedan Racing, Gary Young, agent.
2021	\$33,692,000	\$94,375	357	16.2	\$1,500,000 Vinco, dk.b./br.c. Quality Road—Stormy Welcome, by Storm Cat; consigned by Eddie Woods, agent X; purchased by West Point Thoroughbreds/L.E.B., agent.
2020	\$23,572,500	\$77,797	303	19.2	\$1,100,000 Shaaz, dk.b./br.c. Uncle Mo—Miss Ocean City, by Mineshaft; consigned by Pike Racing, agent; purchased by Michael Lund Petersen, Donato Lanni, agent.
2019	\$29,374,000	\$90,104	326	23.3	\$1,800,000 Gamine, b.f. Into Mischief—Peggy Jane, by Kafwain; consigned by Bobby Dodd, agent; purchased by Michael Lund Petersen, Donato Lanni, agent.
2018	\$24,868,500	\$74,680	333	22.6	\$1,200,000 Lebron J, b.c. Medaglia d’Oro—Tapicat, by Tapit; consigned by Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds, agent; purchased by Dennis O’Neill.
2017	\$25,237,000	\$76,476	330	19.9	\$1,500,000 Curlin’s Honor, ch.c. Curlin—Franscat, by Stormin Fever; consigned by Hartley/De Renzo Thoroughbreds, agent; purchased by Breeze Easy and John Oxley.
2016	\$23,136,400	\$68,654	337	25.9	\$1,000,000 Modest Maven, dk.b./br.f. Uncle Mo—Dream Street, by Tale of the Cat; consigned by Pike Racing, agent; purchased by Chester Broman, Linda Rice, agent.

* The highest-priced horse sold at public auction in Maryland.

— Broker's Tip —

BY RICK ABBOTT

Only Pimlico can save the Triple Crown

Each spring, racing pundits extol the virtues of the Triple Crown races and the horses who compete in them. People argue endlessly over the relative merits of the horses and wax poetic over the winners of the races. However, the fact remains, fewer horses each year compete in all three, or even two, races in the series.

The Preakness Stakes-G1 is run in Maryland two Saturdays after the Kentucky Derby-G1 and New York's Belmont Stakes-G1 is run three Saturdays after the Preakness. In today's real world, Grade 1-caliber horses do not run back on two or three weeks' rest let alone run three times in five weeks. A four- or five-week interval between races is the more likely minimum amount of time between Grade 1 efforts.

Many proposals have been put forward to change the timing of the Triple Crown races and, it is hoped, encourage Kentucky Derby starters to run back in the next two legs of the series. This year only three Derby starters ran in the Preakness and this is not unusual. Once a horse has failed in the Derby, only the \$2 million purse creates any incentive to try for the Woodlawn Vase. While that purse is certainly tempting, it is not unique in Grade 1 races for 3-year-olds.

This year's Kentucky Derby winner, Sovereignty – bred and owned by the most famous and successful stable in all the world (Godolphin) and trained by an ego-less master of the trade (Bill Mott) – skipped the Preakness because his connections felt it was irresponsible to bring him back on two weeks' rest after scoring in the hardest race in the world to win. Meanwhile, many treated this decision as anti-racing and an affront to all things sacred in the sport.

That tells us all we need to know from a horseman's perspective, though Derby runner-up Journalism won the Preakness to prove that two weeks between races works just fine for some.

In her recently published book, *Death of a Racehorse*, author Katie Bo Lillis described the gray area where horses lie between pets on the one hand and livestock on the other. For most of time, horses were firmly in the livestock category and there was never any discussion about racing's "social license"

to operate. The last 20 years have witnessed a marked shift in society's view of horses on the pet/livestock spectrum. Social media and the animal rights movement have done away with animal acts in circuses and Greyhound racing is almost nonexistent. Even with animals that are clearly livestock, vegetarian and vegan diets have increased in popularity partially due to ethical decisions on the part of their adherents. The mostly successful attempt to end horse slaughter has pushed horses toward the pet side of the equation.

Setting aside the question of failing public enthusiasm for the second and third legs of the Triple Crown when the Derby participants don't run, might it not be good public relations to short circuit the discussion spurred by the horses who don't return for the Preakness by changing the schedule?

Most reformers propose running the races on the first Saturdays of May, June and July. This plan would put the Preakness around the Memorial Day weekend and the Belmont on July 4 weekend.

Conventional wisdom holds that the stumbling block to reformation is the New York Racing Association's refusal to move its race from five weeks post-Derby. If this is, indeed, the impediment to Triple Crown reform, it follows that Pimlico and the newly reconstituted Maryland Jockey Club hold the keys with respect to revitalization of the Triple Crown.

Move the Preakness to July 4 weekend. Hold on, hold on, let me finish.

Next year, while Pimlico undergoes a complete and radical reconstruction, the Preakness will be run at Laurel Park while the Belmont Stakes continues to be run at Saratoga at a distance other than the traditional 1½ miles. Presumably, 2027 will see both races return to their traditional locations to much hoopla and fanfare. What better time to bring the Triple Crown into the 21st century, only 27 years after the turn on the millennium.

If the New York Racing Association wants to maintain its traditional date and distance, so be it. Why should Pimlico and the MJC continually be subjugated to the whims of NYRA and the powers that be in New York and to the detri-

ment of Maryland racing. Pimlico will be celebrating its own vibrant renaissance and should be allowed to do so on its terms.

Running the Preakness on July 4 weekend, the biggest celebratory period of the summer, is the perfect time to reintroduce the new Pimlico to Baltimore and the racing public. Additionally, the country's best 3-year-olds will have had four weeks to recover from the Belmont Stakes which will have been run at the new Belmont Park at whatever distance NYRA chooses. NYRA will be unhappy with this change because it depends on a horse going for the Triple Crown to fill Belmont Park to the rafters. That opportunity will rebound to Pimlico and the MJC. What a way to reintroduce to the city of Baltimore.

This change would probably affect the Haskell Invitational at Monmouth Park, but its Grade 1 status and the creativity of the Monmouth racing office has annually made that a great race despite its proximity to the Grade 2 Jim Dandy at Saratoga. The Travers Stakes-G1 will be run at least six weeks after the Preakness. Think of that – a major Grade 1 race to hold the public's fragile interest once a month all summer long: Derby, Belmont, Preakness, Haskell, Travers, Pennsylvania Derby and then the 3-year-olds take on older horses in the Breeders Cup Classic-G1.

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Who Tells the Story?

WHAT HAPPENS IF NO ONE CELEBRATES THE THOROUGHBRED IN SPORT?

By Kristen Kovatch Bentley

In April, the North American equestrian world turned its focus to the Kentucky Three-Day Event in Lexington, one of only seven eventing competitions in the world at the five-star (highest) level. Eventing is an equestrian triathlon: horses and riders first demonstrate their training in a prescribed dressage test, followed by the feat of stamina and courage that is cross-country, and conclude with a show jumping round at the end of three days. Across the Kentucky Three-Day Event, which hosts competition at the five-star and four-star levels, Malibu Moon was the second-most prolific sire, with three offspring entered. The only stallion represented by more horses was the leading warmblood eventing sire in the world.

At the beginning of May, another of the world's five-star eventing competitions took place in Australia, and for an incredible fourth time in his career, the Thoroughbred gelding WillingaPark Clifford (Passing Shot—Twin Pearls, by Double Income) won the Adelaide International with Hazel Shannon in the irons. They're the only partnership to have won the same five-star title four times. They were followed in second place by another Thoroughbred, The Bandit (Mysterium [Jpn]: Empire Maker—Ravi's Lovin, by Giant's Causeway), ridden by Shane Rose.

All told, it was an incredible spring season for Thoroughbreds in sport at the upper levels of eventing. But when Thoroughbreds succeed in careers beyond racing, whose responsibility is it to tell their story? And why does that story matter?

To learn more about how Australian racing and equestrian media celebrated the achievements of Thoroughbreds

at Adelaide, as well as in sport in general, we spoke with Kim Duffy, senior animal care manager at Racing Queensland. In Australia, each state has its own Principal Racing Authority, which includes a designated off-the-track program to facilitate the retirement of racehorses (Thoroughbred and Standardbred) and promote their versatility for second careers.

"In Australia, it's the off-the-track programs that push this messaging," Duffy said. "We're promoting aftercare not only outside the racing industry, but to the racing industry as well." These marketing efforts vary by PRA, depending on funding and staffing, and are produced in addition to these programs' primary objective, which is to offer aftercare initiatives to support retired racehorses. It took the Queensland Off-The-Track Program a year of getting established before the resources were available to allow the program to venture into the social-media landscape.

Now, the Queensland Off-The-Track pages on Facebook and Instagram share five posts a week, striking a balance between program news and follower-submitted stories about retired racehorses. Additionally, QOTT produces longform content on its website, taking deeper dives into stories, some of which also get reprinted in the PRA's industry publications. QOTT also works closely with Racing Queensland's robust media team when racing festival schedules allow, coordinating video production focusing on former racehorses in their new careers.

While Duffy and her team are constantly expanding the audience for QOTT, these stories still straddle two industries.

“Previously, racing jurisdictions would promote these stories to a small degree – maybe one or two a year,” she said. “And those stories tended to be about the really good racehorses, which always invited criticism about what happens to the less successful horses, of which we know many go on to be very successful sport horses as well.”

Equestrian media, such as the publication *Equestrian Hub*, usually offers a cover story to QOTT every year, but are also responsible for covering a much wider landscape than just a single breed.

“They don’t promote Thoroughbreds as regularly as we do,” Duffy said. “And why would they? They don’t have the same motivation to do so. I don’t know if this work would be getting done as extensively without the PRA off-the-track programs.”

Racing South Australia sponsors the CCI3*-L class of competition at the Adelaide Equestrian Festival, symbolizing its commitment to horses in careers after racing, and so covered the results of the event on its website and social media. As a relatively small PRA compared to Racing Queensland, however, the team dedicated to its off-track program (Thorough Care SA) is just one person; the program has no additional social media. Equestrian publications around the world picked up on WillingaPark Clifford’s record-smashing victory, but as Duffy alluded to, mention only in passing his breed and first career as a racehorse.

This is much the same landscape that we navigate in North America: the primary storytellers of the Thoroughbred in careers beyond racing are the handful of advocacy and incentive programs under the larger aftercare umbrella. Unless an equestrian journalist with a particular interest in Thoroughbreds takes a deeper dive into a horse’s racing history and is savvy with the racing industry’s tools and services when reporting on their achievements in sport, nothing more than the horse’s breed might be mentioned.

Many Thoroughbreds compete in their second careers with names other than their Jockey Club racing names, making tracing their achievements even more challenging. North American racing media, like platforms in Australia, have increased their coverage of Thoroughbreds beyond racing in recent years, but their primary purpose remains following the sport, not the breed.

But why does this matter?

The racing industry worldwide is the biggest producer of Thoroughbreds; only a handful of breeders produce Thoroughbreds directly for sport. While the majority of Thoroughbreds are therefore bred with the intention of rac-

“In Australia, it’s the off-the-track programs that push this messaging. We’re promoting aftercare not only outside the racing industry, but to the racing industry as well.”

– *Kim Duffy, senior animal care manager at Racing Queensland*

ing, the reality is that many will need different careers when their racing days are over – if they ever begin.

But it’s bigger than simply finding new careers: the Thoroughbred as a breed is a major contributor to the sport-horse breeding world, refining existing warmblood breeds. A Dutch warmblood with a Thoroughbred parent, however, is still a Dutch warmblood. Similarly, the American Quarter Horse recognizes Quarter Horses with a Thoroughbred parent via its appendix registry; these horses can then earn their way to full Quarter Horse registry based on performance. In both of these scenarios, the Thoroughbred is contributing 50 percent (perhaps even more) of the blood, and yet is written out completely as far as the breed.

The Thoroughbred breed, for all intents and purposes, has no stud book to protect its interests. The Jockey Club exists for the maintenance of the Thoroughbred breed in racing, and while its efforts through the Thoroughbred Incentive Program at least acknowledge the breed’s participation in sport beyond its racing days, the organization does not serve as a registry or governing body for the breed as a whole.

As North American foal crops continue to shrink, tracks continue to close, and the industry feels like it’s under threat for its very existence, the future not only of racing but of an entire breed is at stake: who will protect and promote the Thoroughbred? ■

Kristen Kovatch Bentley is the managing director of the Retired Racehorse Project. For more, see therrp.org.

Judgment Call

PROVEN INNOCENT PAYS OFF IN GRADE 1 AT SARATOGA

By Sean Clancy

Good courtroom dramas don't give anything away until the end. Proven Innocent lived up to his name – and the genre – with a just-in-time win in the \$150,000 Beverly R. Steinman Handicap-G1 at Saratoga Race Course in Saratoga Springs, N.Y., June 4.

Rained out and moved to Aqueduct for its debut in 2024, the Steinman drew sun and a field of seven as the first race of the 2025 Belmont Stakes Racing Festival. The 2⅜-mile hurdle stakes, named for the longtime steeplechase owner and supporter from Lancaster, Pa., was anything but clear beforehand.

Carloun (Ire) owned a Grade 1 win from last fall, but his 2025 debut was as dull as an old Boy Scout knife. Awakened won at the top level in August 2023, but hadn't found that form since. Sultan Pierji (Fr) came off a nice win at Radnor, but faced his toughest assignment. Seemingly on his way in a three-win rookie season in 2022, Proven Innocent lost all five starts the next year and raced just once in 2024 – an allowance win in a race restricted to apprentice jockeys.

Sent off as the nearly 5-1 third choice behind Carloun and Awakened, Proven Innocent dropped out the back as Carloun sped off to a 15-length lead. Bold but erratic, he fell at the fifth fence to basically create a new race.

Little Trilby (GB), Sultan Pierji, Evie's Prince and Proven Innocent went outside and Awakened and Auction Kingdom went inside as Carloun and jockey Paddy O'Hanlon scrambled to their feet, unharmed. The hexad regrouped and the race transformed. Little Trilby led with a circuit to go, was joined briefly by Evie's Prince, and opened up again as the field

headed down the backside. All the while, Freddie Procter had positioned Proven Innocent outside in fourth.

Midway on the final turn, Evie's Prince and Bernie Dalton collared Little Trilby from the outside and Awakened and Conor Tierney slipped through on the inside to gain a neck advantage. And still Proven Innocent stalked three wide. Awakened, making his first start since last summer, was the first to tire. Evie's Prince battled back to get in front, but couldn't stave off Proven Innocent, who swept past late and scored by three-quarters of a length. Awakened stayed for third. Trained by Jack Fisher for Bruton Street-US, Proven Innocent won a Saratoga allowance and an Aqueduct novice stakes in 2022, so the racetrack form held up.

"Jack made the case that his best form is at the flat tracks but it's from a couple of years ago and he needs to re-find it," Procter said. "That's how Jamie [Bargary] won on him here and at Aqueduct before, just sat him out the back, especially when they're going hard. I was confident they were going to come back to me. I was fairly sure Evie's Prince was going to give me a nice tow to the top of the straight. I was a bit worried when I saw Conor get a run up the inside but once I pressed go, my lad always had him in his sights and knew where the line was.

"He was fantastic, he dug deep and galloped all the way to the line."

It was Procter's first Grade 1 win, and just his second mount at Saratoga.

"It's great to be up here. I've only ridden here once before and that was three years ago, it's great to be back and it's great



COGLIANESE PHOTOGRAPHY

Proven Innocent jumps a fence early in his victory in the Beverly R. Steinman Stakes during Belmont week at Saratoga.

to have a winner here,” said the British amateur. “When I first came over here, I was happy to get any rides I could. I was delighted to get put up in a \$10,000 apprentice race so to now be here in three years and win my first Grade 1, it’s fantastic.”

Bred by Stuart Janney III and trained by Shug McGaughey on the flat, Proven Innocent won a maiden on the turf going 1¼ miles at Belmont Park in September 2021. Purchased in a package deal with Romp, Proven Innocent enjoyed a stellar 4-year-old season, winning three times, including the William Entenmann Novice stakes over champion The Mean Queen (Ire) in 2022. It got rocky after that.

“He ran really well his novice year and then he’s had an injury here, an injury there, he’s had heatstroke issues, so I didn’t know what to think before the race,” co-owner Mike Hankin said. “I thought it was a very competitive race. He jumps well and to see him grind it out like that was fun. I was proud of him. He was grinding, and that works for him. That’s where I think his breeding really helps.”

A son of Blame and the Pennsylvania-bred A.P. Indy mare Meghan’s Joy, Proven Innocent is a half-brother to flat stakes horses Minister’s Joy, Hunting, Quiet Harbor, Seal Cove,

Norumbega, Ironicus and On Leave, six graded. Meghan’s Joy’s last foal to race, Proven Innocent has won five of 15 starts over jumps, with earnings of \$255,600.

Bruton Street-US typically involves Hankin, Charlie Noell and Charlie Fenwick, but Marylanders JoAnn and David Hayden joined the trio when Hankin (who boards mares at their Dark Hollow Farm) offered.

“Mike called me up one day and said, ‘We just bought two horses from Shug. Do you want to take a piece of them?’ ” said David after the Steinman. “It wasn’t a lot of money, and I said I’d take 25 percent. He said I couldn’t have 25 percent, so we took 12½ percent. One got claimed at Colonial Downs for \$25,000 and this horse has been a lot of fun.”

JoAnn echoed the sentiment.

“We must be the luckiest people in the world,” she said. “Mike had some mares at our place, and we just connected over that. Blame is one of our favorite sires, Stuart Janney who lives in Maryland like we do, bred him. We came in with no expectations. We came to Saratoga [in 2022] and he won. I was like, ‘Oh my God, this is a lot of fun.’ ” ■

Additional reporting by Joe Clancy

Driving Win

ABAAN GETS BETTER OF SNAP DECISION IN GRADE 1 IROQUOIS

By Sean Clancy ■ Photographs by Tod Marks

Bernie and Kate Dalton loaded up three horses and hit the road. Based at Springdale Training Center in Camden, S.C., the Daltons drove 482 miles and pondered their chances at the Iroquois Steeplechase in Nashville, Tenn., May 10.

Five-year-old mare Mosey prepared to take a big swing against males in a \$40,000 maiden hurdle. Carolina Cup winner China Beach eyed his third consecutive win in the \$125,000 Green Pastures Stakes for novice hurdlers. And Abaan stepped into the ring against Snap Decision in the \$250,000 Iroquois-G1. Three weeks earlier, in receipt of 18 pounds, Abaan couldn't catch the 2024 champion in the \$100,000 Temple Gwathmey Handicap-G2 at Middleburg, Va.

Why would this time, at the richest stop on the National Steeplechase Association's spring calendar, be any different?

"Are we crazy driving out here?" asked Kate, the trainer. "We couldn't beat him getting 18 pounds off. How are we going to beat him at level weights?"

Bernie, the jockey, didn't hesitate.

"They don't pay the money if you don't go by the wire," he told his wife.

She laughed, he did too, but the point was there – do your jobs, prepare your horse, take your shot, check the results afterward.

Snap Decision made history with a fourth Gwathmey win April 19 and sought the same never-achieved quadruple in the Iroquois while also looking to become the sport's career

earnings leader. Seven rivals turned up for the 3-mile affair. All but one had lost to Snap Decision at least once, with Abaan coming up a neck short in the Gwathmey while carrying 146 pounds to the winner's 164.

Under weight-for-age conditions, everyone carried 158 at Nashville, where the official turf condition was good but got called "dead" by jockeys all day thanks to rain the week before. The turf, the extended trip and the best hurdle effort of Abaan's career produced an upset as the 8-year-old son of Will Take Charge scored by 1½ lengths for Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners and Daigneault Thoroughbreds. Snap Decision settled for second, a neck in front of Vae Patron (Fr) after 5:42.

After a false start, Abaan melted away from the flag and saw the whole field over the first eight fences.

"My theory was I was going to ride the exact same race I rode in Middleburg," said Dalton. "Drop him out the back, creep along, jump along, and let him take himself into it."

Ahead of him, Foxy Walk (Ire) made the running, followed by 2024 race runner-up Vae Patron, Howyabud (Ire) and Zabeel Champion (GB). Snap Decision set up in fifth, outside and on hold. The order didn't really change for a full lap, but the pace quickened on the downhill run to the ninth fence. Up the backstretch the final time, Foxy Walk still led but Zabeel Champion, Snap Decision and Abaan motored into contention at the 14th fence.

Zabeel Champion carried a slim lead to the 15th, but fell. Foxy Walk fell over him and Zarak the Brave (Fr) went down over them both. Outside the melee, Snap Decision and jockey



Abaan (left) kicks away from Snap Decision after the last fence in the Grade 1 Iroquois in May.

Graham Watters pressed on and led around the final bend – just ahead of Abaan outside and Vae Patron inside.

Abaan drew even before the last fence and swept past, keeping the runner-up safe as Dalton looked back to be sure. No jockeys or horses were injured in the falls at the second-last, which somehow didn't affect the first three finishers.

"We were outside of it," Dalton said. "They were all bunching inside us. Graham and I were outside, and we got a clear passage through."

A \$280,000 yearling purchase at Keeneland September in 2018, Abaan made three starts for Shadwell Farm and trainer Danny Peitz in 2020 before selling to Eclipse and Daigneault and moving to Todd Pletcher's barn. There, the chestnut won three times in 2021 including the 2-mile H. Allen Jerkens Stakes at Gulfstream Park. The Kentucky-bred added the W.L. McKnight-G2 at Gulfstream in January 2022, but lost his next seven starts (six in graded stakes) before changing careers. In 11 starts over jumps since August 2023, Abaan owns five wins, four seconds, a third and \$510,250 of his career \$839,000 in earnings.

Call the conversion a success. Eclipse partner Joe Fowler started it all with a discussion about Abaan's future with president and founder Aron Wellman.

"I know you guys have probably never done this, but this horse would be so good as a jump horse," said Fowler, who offered to buy out other partners to make it happen. Eclipse went along with it and, more importantly, Abaan did too. A front-runner with a reputation for being difficult in the paddock while racing on the flat, the long, lean 8-year-old changed games – and his game.

"He's really learned to enjoy it, and I think he really likes his life," said Dalton. "When he came, he was nice to be around and that, but he would take a finger off you in a heartbeat. He's still nippy, but he's a much nicer horse to be around. He's just a happy horse. He had gotten sour, I think. He likes this. He starts jumping by horses and you can just feel him grow underneath you. He's amazing. He really is."

Abaan improved out of the Gwathmey run, something the Daltons hoped for but didn't necessarily expect. Early in the season, he missed two weeks of training after grabbing a quarter while turned out in a paddock at Springdale.

"It was a nasty overreach, and we missed two weeks," said Dalton. "All he could do was walk, and it was probably another four or five days jogging before he could go back to galloping. He didn't have his first piece of work until Carolina Cup Day [March 29]. We were really pleased with him at



China Beach flashes his jumping form over the last in the Green Pastures novice at the Iroquois, one of two important wins on the day for the South Carolina-based Kate and Bernie Dalton.



Middleburg, and we figured there might be another little improvement. Whether it was an 18-pound improvement, we didn't know. I think the extra half-mile was probably more help to us today than anything, that and the ground."

Snap Decision didn't make history, but added a second runner-up finish to his Iroquois record – to go with three wins – in five tries. The 11-year-old all but toyed with Abaan going 2½ miles at Middleburg three weeks earlier, but couldn't handle his rival in the Iroquois. The competitors in the Daltons loved to win; the fans would have liked to witness another piece of history.

"You hate to beat him," said Bernie. "He's been a stalwart of the sport for years, but if anybody was going to spoil the party, we're delighted it was us."

A New York Racing Association age limits prevents Snap Decision from racing at Saratoga or Aqueduct over the summer, but Abaan was also destined for a vacation before major stops in September, October and November beckon.

The Daltons will have the truck and trailer ready.

Dalton understudy shines, too.

China Beach got the day started for the Dalton camp with a victory in the Green Pastures, taking over from leader Boldog (Fr) after 2 miles and seeing out a 4-length victory for St Rita Racing. Evie's Prince lost his jockey at the last, leaving second to Blue Creek and third to Walk The Warrior (Ire). China Beach won for the third consecutive time and provided a local win.

"I've been coming here since I was 7, 8 years old probably," said Ted Thompson, who heads up St Rita with his wife Rita. "My sisters both rode, so my parents made me because they didn't want to drive me to something else. I did Pony Club here – we'd sneak the ponies out on the track and jump the old natural fences, that kind of stuff."

Thompson watched the Sloan family find success at the Iroquois and rode a winner when Avalanche Cannon outdueled Hillside Spring in a two-horse timber race in 1994. Now a member of the Iroquois race committee, Thompson is involved in nearly every aspect of the meet, a major fundraiser for the Monroe Carell Jr. Children's Hospital at Vanderbilt University.

"It's everything you think it would be," Thompson said of a hometown win. "It's our Derby, essentially. People have been coming here since they were kids. They all tell stories about sitting on the hill back in the day when you were lucky to survive the hill. And it's still going. You think times move on, but people still come out."

China Beach won three flat races for Don Brown and trainer Lilly Kurtinecz, but dropped to the \$6,250 claiming level by the end of 2023 and was referred to Thompson by jump jockey Mell Boucher.

"I saw a video of him jogging and I was like, 'He's sound, he looks like he'd be genuine enough,' " Thompson said. "I figured we could win a maiden claimer with him, or he'd be a 110 and 115 [handicap] horse. We'd have been thrilled with

that, but he's just always been a little better than we thought he was – which never happens to me. Never.”

It did this time. Thompson got him started, sent him to the Daltons for more company and experience and the Florida-bred son of Treasure Beach (GB) broke his maiden in his third start last fall. He opened 2025 with a win in the Carolina Cup in March before taking the Green Pastures and vaulting to the top of the second-year novice division with \$120,000 earned this year.

“We keep trying to pretend that he's not a good horse,” said Thompson. “He owes us nothing. He doesn't have to win another race, but he just keeps getting a little better. That's a nice horse to be part of.”

Gold Charm proves value

Irv Naylor's Gold Charm (Ire) continued her dominance of the filly/mare hurdle division in the \$50,000 Margaret

Currey Henley Stakes – her fourth consecutive win and sixth since being imported in 2023. At Nashville, she rated a dozen lengths off the early lead, then swept past late to win by 2¾ lengths for jockey Gerard Galligan. Diamonds For Her (GB) finished second with Porte Jaune (Fr) third in a four-horse race.

Bred to be a flat horse, Gold Charm lost all 10 starts on all-weather and turf tracks in Britain and Ireland, but has excelled with Maryland trainer Cyril Murphy. In 10 starts over hurdles, she has finished worse than third just once with two wins in 2023 and three – one over Abaan at the end of the season – last year while pulling in \$281,000 in purses.

The 6-year-old daughter of Golden Horn (GB) and the Cozzene mare Deveron has made Murphy earn it.

“She's not like that when she gallops,” he said, with a nod to her relaxed running style. “She's maturing, but she's still enthusiastic. I came out yesterday morning, we just loped



Grade 1 Success

Proven Innocent wins Grade 1 Beverly Steinman at Belmont Festival at Saratoga

Congratulations

Bruton Street-US, jockey Freddie Procter and trainer Jack Fisher

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Gold Charm leaps the last on the way to another major stakes triumph in the filly/mare hurdle division for owner Irv Naylor and trainer Cyril Murphy.



along the bottom and we came around the turn to come up to pull up at a timber fence. She locked her jaw, got her tongue out and went to bolt.”

The former jump jockey normally leaves the galloping to exercise rider Annie Finney, but she didn’t make the trip.

“Because Annie just sits up there and throws the reins at her, she’s been the making of her,” said Murphy. “She’ll put up with her because of what she does when she gets here to the races. She’s a very nice mare. She’s tough, and she keeps winning, and she enjoys it – she knows she does well.”

In other Iroquois action, local owners Leipers Fork Steeplechase won the opener, a 120 handicap hurdle going 2¾ miles, with For The Parish (Ire). Visiting Irish jockey Danny Mullins rode for trainer Leslie Young. Maiden races went to Bonnebosq (Fr) for Hurricana Farm, trainer Arch Kingsley and jockey Freddie Procter, and Dynamite Dan (Ire) for Northwoods Stable, Tom Garner and Evan Dwan. Motley Crew Racing’s Marcel Magic (Ire) won the allowance timber for Procter and trainer Kathy Neilson by disqualification as Uco Valley (Ire) went off course.

Jumping Around

■ While Iroquois hosted major names in Tennessee, Pennsylvania’s Willowdale Steeplechase put up a mixed card of hurdle and timber races for a variety of divisions. Maryland-bred Mr. Fine Threads, racing for Armata Stable and trainer Joe Davies, won the featured \$35,000 Willowdale Steeplechase over timber. Charlie Marshall rode the winner, who ousted The Butler Yates (Ire) by 1½ lengths. The 12-year-old son of Sightseeing opened the year with an allowance win

at My Lady’s Manor and fell at the 16th fence of the Maryland Hunt Cup. The same owner/trainer/jockey combination won a maiden timber with De Nordener (Ire) on the card. Trainer Todd McKenna doubled on the day, winning a maiden claiming hurdle with Molly and Paul Willis’ Anador (Fr) and an apprentice-jockey allowance hurdle with Runnymoore Racing’s Tufton Avenue (Ire).

■ The Radnor Hunt Races closed the spring season in Pennsylvania May 17. Owner/breeder Alison Farwell won the opener, a \$15,000 maiden claiming hurdle, with Maryland-bred 4-year-old Final Opportunity. The son of Hoppertunity and the Double Honor mare Double Delta scored by a length in his hurdle debut for Murphy and Dwan. Sultan Pierji (Fr) put Dwan back in the winner’s circle in the hurdle feature, a \$35,000 allowance, when he outran Auction Kingdom late to score by 5¾ lengths for Naylor and Garner. The 5-year-old finished second at a similar level at the Virginia Gold Cup. Owners Sharon Sheppard and Peggy Steinman teamed up to take a maiden hurdle with Mooney Love (Ire), one of two wins on the day for Young.

■ Through June 14, Dwan led the jockeys’ standings with eight wins – one more than Watters, Galligan, Procter and Dan Nevin, with Stephen Mulqueen and Dalton lurking with six. Jack Fisher led the trainers’ board with 12 wins, to 10 each for Young and Neilson. With major wins by Snap Decision and Proven Innocent, Bruton Street-US led the owners with \$267,800. ■

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Maryland-bred Mindframe earns Claiborne stud deal

By Joe Clancy

Dear regional breeders, Claiborne Farm's Jacob West has a message.

"Have a good program and stick with it. Keep doing what you're doing and these things happen."

These things are horses such as Mindframe, a Maryland-bred 4-year-old who could have an impact on the national Horse of the Year picture before 2025 runs its course. Bred by Larry Johnson, the son of Constitution was recently syndicated to join the 2026 stallion roster at Claiborne, the Hancock family's famed Thoroughbred nursery in Paris, Ky. Opened in 1910, Claiborne bred, raised and/or stood at stud the likes of Seabiscuit, Gallant Fox, Nashua, Kelso, Forego, Bold Ruler, Secretariat, Ruffian, Lure, Personal Ensign, Sir Ivor, Mr. Prospector, Unbridled, Danzig and so on.

Mindframe earned his chance by opening 2025 with triumphs in three consecutive graded stakes – the 1-mile Gulfstream Park Mile-G2 in March, the 7-furlong Churchill Downs Stakes-G1 in May and the 1½-mile Stephen Foster-G1 in late June. Combined, they make him the top older horse in the nation and the only one with two Grade 1 wins on dirt. The 2025 success comes on the back of a four-start campaign in 2024 – lopsided debut maiden win, lopsided first-level allowance win, seconds to Dornoch in the Belmont Stakes-G1 and Haskell Stakes-G1.

West has been involved since Johnson sent the colt to the 2022 Keeneland September yearling sale as part of the Betz Thoroughbreds consignment. Hip 874, Maryland-bred, Virginia-certified and a fourth-generation Johnson homebred, sold for \$600,000 on a bid by Repole



Coady Media

Stable and St. Elias Stable. West was part of the team that bought him, and remembers seeing potential.

"When we saw him as a yearling, he was incredible physically," said West, who joined Claiborne as stallion seasons and bloodstock manager in May 2024. "He came from a good breeder in Mr. Johnson, so you had a lot of confidence buying there, plus Constitution was on the

rise too and continues to be. He was a framey horse who looked like he would get a route of ground and being out of a Street Sense mare that told you he would too. It was easy for us to connect the dots there."

A May foal, Mindframe was always going to need some patience. He didn't run as a 2-year-old, but by his third lifetime start took on 1¼ miles in the Belmont at Saratoga. He made the lead, ducked out (and in) late and lost by a half-length. The Haskell was similar as he led in mid-stretch, but couldn't hold off Belmont nemesis Dornoch in the final 16th of a mile.

"If it wasn't for Dornoch, he'd be 7-for-7," said West. "One horse has beaten him."

The count is zero this year, as Mindframe flashed versatility and seasoning with wins at three distances and against the likes of champion Sierre Leone, Kentucky Derby-G1 winner Mystik Dan and Grade 1 sprint winners Book'em Danno and Mullikin.

"He's a big, gorgeous horse now," said West. "He's the prototypical type of what you would think of as a classic, two-turn horse."

With one-turn speed.

Claiborne made a stallion pitch after the Gulfstream Park win, but had to work harder once Mindframe added the Churchill Downs

and other stallion farms jumped into the competition.

"When he won the Churchill Downs going seven-eighths I think so many people knew that race, a Grade 1 going that trip in that field, and how important it was," said West, who still advises Repole on sales purchases. "That race mattered. It was a pretty incredible field, pretty serious. That picked up everybody's head."

West "separated church and state," and made the first offer, then had to wait through the negotiation process. Fully syndicated by the Foster, Mindframe backed up the investment with another Grade 1 win against another quality field – this time going two turns. The profile fits the stallion barn at Claiborne,

"He fits the mold of Unbridled and Blame and the other very good horses that have been here, he's cut from the

same cloth," West said. "He's able to carry his speed around a route of ground. He fits a lot of the in-house mares we have, being there are a number by Blame and War Front. He could be one of those generational horses."

Johnson, who died in February, would have loved it. Mindframe's pedigree traces back to Ran's Chick, a \$2,400 purchase at Timonium who was injured before she could race and turned into Johnson's first broodmare. Her 1987 daughter by Maryland stallion Parfaitement, Special Kell, was bred to Maryland-bred champion Star de Naskra and produced Star Kell in 1997. Mated with Street Sense, Star Kell produced Walk of Stars in 2011 and in 2021 Walk of Stars produced Mindframe, who was foaled at the Bowman family's Dance Forth Farm in Chestertown.

"A good horse can come from anywhere, we're firm believers in that," said West. "We didn't buy him hoping he'd show up on your average Laurel Park stakes day, but Mr. Johnson was very keen on the whole program. He believed in it and put his money where his mouth was."

Johnson's daughters Kelly Caraballo and Tracy Mulroy are sticking with the script. They bought a share in Mindframe as a stallion – less than three years after their father sold him as a yearling – and attended the Stephen Foster.

West, who got to know Johnson a little after purchasing Mindframe, felt the weight of it.

"They couldn't not participate," he said. "I told them I know he wasn't there, but he was with us in spirit. It was an emotional day."

Maryland honors history as part of Preakness week

By Ali Çetinok

Ahead of the 150th Preakness Stakes at Pimlico Race Course in May, the Maryland Horse Library and Education Center in Reisterstown brought the past and present of the state's Thoroughbred industry together for a three-day celebration of heritage, history and the next generation.

From May 8-10, the MHLEC hosted a pair of evening events and coordinated the Maryland Horse Farm Tour, giving fans a chance to engage with the state's equestrian roots – and its future.

On the evening of Thursday, May 8, shined a spotlight on the last Maryland-bred to win the Preakness. Members of the Boniface family – who bred, owned and trained Deputed Testamony – joined winning jockey Donnie Miller for a video screening and discussion about their classic victory in 1983. Watching the original ABC Sports broadcast of that rainy day in Baltimore alongside fans, they revisited one of Maryland's most iconic racing moments.

"The two programs were great," said Barry Richmond, a retired U.S. administrative judge from Baltimore who regularly attends events at the Maryland Horse Library. "I really enjoyed the Bonifaces and Donnie Miller talking about the 1983 win with Deputed Testamony. That

was wonderful to have them both there. It made it come alive."

The following evening the library hosted a showing of *The Preakness: An American Classic*, a 1999 Eclipse Award-winning documentary. Executive producer Karin De Francis and writer John Scheinman led a conversation about the race's legacy and Maryland's role in Thoroughbred racing lore.

"People were cheering and applauding during the showing," said Maryanna Skowronski, program director for the Maryland Horse Foundation. "It gave them a chance to go back in time, to relive those memories."

For Richmond, the events were more than nostalgic. They were a reminder of why history matters.

"It's great to hear other horse racing enthusiasts – their memories, their views," he said. "People from my generation and to have younger people show interest in horse racing is extremely important. We need that support and that enthusiasm."

That multigenerational importance was on full display during Sunday's Maryland Horse Farm Tour, which brought visitors to Thoroughbred farms across the state. Organized as part of the broader Preakness Festival, the self-guid-

ed tour featured active breeding, training and retirement facilities opening their gates to the public – many for the first time.

Katy Voss, who owns and operates Chanceland Farm in Howard County, noted the emotional power of the day.

"One group had, I don't know, three or four cars. Three generations, maybe four," Voss said. "And that's just, again, instilling a love for the horses to a new generation each time that happens, which I think is the goal for our events here at the library, for this Preakness Festival event, specifically this Maryland Horse Farm Tour."

Skowronski agreed. "Most of the visitors weren't involved in horses or racing at all," she said. "Some had always been curious about the farms they drove past. Others came from out of state."

Presented by the Maryland Horse Breeders Association, Maryland Racing Commission, Maryland Million, Maryland Department of Labor, Maryland Department of Agriculture and Maryland Horse Industry Board, the tour touched Baltimore, Carroll, Cecil, Frederick, Harford and Howard counties and included breeding farms, training centers, Thoroughbred retirement farms and veterinary centers.

The goals of the library and its affiliated programs go beyond racing.

"Most people don't realize the economic benefit the horse industry brings to Maryland," said Skowronski. "Even people who aren't racing fans may not realize just how many riders, riding schools, and academic programs involve horses."

She added that many Marylanders have a deep appreciation for horses, even

if they don't have access to them – due to finances, age or location.

"The Maryland Horse Library gives them a place to stay connected with the sport they love," she said. "We try to offer a variety of programming. Some of it's general interest, and some is more academic or business-focused. One recent program was on equine biosecurity – a timely topic given the recent news on avian flu."

Skowronski noted the significance of holding these events during Preakness week, when much of the state's sporting attention is turned to racing, when

Pimlico Race Course is on the verge of a complete rebuild and when the Preakness reached a significant milestone like its 150th running.

To Richmond, the MHLEC's mission is personal. "I'm thrilled that we have the horse library as an archive and an educational center," he said. "I'm one of your biggest fans. I'm always talking it up."

Public events are about making space for all kinds of horse lovers – those who remember the golden days, and those who are just beginning to discover them.

"It's important because so many people today live in developments," Skow-

ronski said. "Maybe they have a dog or cat, but no exposure to horses or farms. This event helped bridge that gap. It showed people that farms aren't gated communities keeping them out. They're places of hard work and passion."

And sometimes, the places spark a lifelong love.

"You have people who come this year who are going to tell their friends and tell other families, 'Oh, you should bring your mom here for Mother's Day,'" Voss said. "I think Mother's Day was a great aspect of it all."

2025 Governor's Cup awards presented

Led by a victory in the 2024 Legacy Chase at Shawan Downs, Riverdee Stable's Queens Empire (Ire) took the 2025 Maryland Governor's Cup Steeplechase Horse of the Year title by one point over Daniel Colhoun, Achsah O'Donovan and Harvey Goolsby's Maryland-bred Bogey's Image and Michael Smith's Wrestlingwithrae (Ire).

Organized by the Maryland Steeplechase Association, the Maryland Governor's Cup Series recognizes the top performers in events throughout the state, starting with last fall's Legacy Chase at Shawan Downs in September and concluding at the Potomac Hunt Races in May. It is unique in that it combines placings from National Steeplechase Association race meets with informal point-to-point meets. The awards were presented June 19 at the annual awards reception at the Elkridge-Harford Hunt Club in Monkton.

Queens Empire and Bogey's Image finished one-two at Shawan Downs, and the Riverdee runner added additional points with placings at the Green Spring Valley Point-to-Point in March and Grand National Steeplechase in April. Bogey's Image won at the Elkridge-Harford Hunt Point-to-Point and in the My Lady's Manor Stakes in April; Wrestlingwithrae scored in the Grand National Timber Stakes.

Bogey's Image (by the late Anchor and Hope Farm stallion Imagining) was Maryland-bred Steeplechase Horse and leading Maryland Million-sired Steeplechase Horse, each prize worth \$500.

Mark Beecher, whose biggest score came in with Maryland Hunt Cup winner Road to Oz, was leading trainer. Overall leading rider was Dan Nevin.



The 2025 Governor's Cup Steeplechase horse of the year (Open Timber Champion) was Riverdee Stable's Queens Empire (Ire).

Governor's Cup Steeplechase Horse of the Year (Open Timber Champion):

Queens Empire (Ire) (Riverdee Stable)

Novice Timber Champion: Track And Trace (Ire) (Bruton Street-US)

Amateur/Apprentice Timber Horse and Rider Champion: Be Counted and James Wyatt

Heavyweight Timber Champion (tie): Rocket Star Red (Lucy Goelet), Bogey's Image (Harvey Goolsby, Achsah O'Donovan and Dan Colhoun)

ITM Irish-bred Horse of the Year: Queens Empire (Ire) (Riverdee Stable)

Maryland-bred Steeplechase Horse: Bogey's Image (Harvey Goolsby, Achsah O'Donovan and Dan Colhoun).

Maryland Million-sired Horse of the Year: Bogey's Image, by Imagining (Daniel Colhoun, Achsah O'Donovan and Harvey Goolsby)

H. Turney McKnight Leading Owner: Armata Stables.

Leading Trainer: Joe Davies

H. Brooks Durkee Memorial Leading Timber Rider: Dan Nevin

Thomas H. Voss Memorial Perpetual Award for Leading Amateur Rider: Dan Nevin

Overall Rider: Dan Nevin

Lady Rider: Virginia Korrell

Voss Amateur Flat Race Series: Dan Nevin

Junior Small Pony Rider: Cami Kern

Junior Medium Pony Rider: Abby Taylor

Junior Large Pony Rider: Carly Kern

Leading Junior Non TB-Horse Rider: Abby Taylor

Overall Pony Rider: Pauly Aquilera

Junior Horse Rider: Carly Kern

Austin Tamberino Memorial Junior Rider Award: Carly Kern

D.M. Smithwick Jr. Junior Foxchasing and Cubbing Scholarships: Sophia Villasces and Daniel Edelsen



MARYLAND-BRED STAKES WINNERS

Seismic Beauty makes grade in stakes debut

It was a Maryland-bred exacta at Santa Anita Park when Seismic Beauty outfinished stablemate Splendor in her stakes debut in the Santa Margarita Stakes-G2 May 25.

Sent off the second choice, at 1.70-1, of the Bob Baffert-trained duo, Seismic Beauty buzzed the field. She set fractions of :23.05 and :46.25 while never seriously pressed, covered 6 furlongs in 1:09.84, hit the mile mark in 1:34.96 with a 3-length advantage, and crossed the wire in front by 5 lengths in 1:48.30, the fastest 1½-mile Santa Mar-

garita in 13 years. She earned a 104 Beyer Speed Figure, tied for sixth highest this year beyond a mile on the main track.

"That time, whoa," Baffert said from the winner's circle. "That's serious racehorse time."

Owned by My Racehorse and Peter Leidel, who purchased her for \$550,000 at the Keeneland September yearling sale, Seismic Beauty is the first foal for the stakes-placed Medaglia d'Oro mare Knarsdale. Bred by 2500 Determined Stud, which purchased her dam at the 2020



Benoit Photo

Keeneland November sale for \$430,000, Seismic Beauty sold as a weanling at the 2021 Fasig-Tipton Kentucky November sale for \$400,000, tops among regional-bred weanlings that year.

Unraced at 2, Seismic Beauty made her first starts at Del Mar last August, missing by a neck to eventual graded winner One Magic Philly at 6½ furlongs before a 5-length win at 6 furlongs (in 1:09.06). She didn't reappear until February.

In her first three starts this year, allowances at Santa Ani-

ta, Seismic Beauty finished second in February, third in March, and won by 10 lengths in April, the latter at 1 mile.

The Elkstone Group-bred Splendor, carrying the By Talla Racing colors, came in off three graded-stakes starts, including the Grade 1 La Brea in December, while recording two seconds and a fourth.

The chalky Maryland-bred \$1 exacta paid \$4.40.

Seismic Beauty pushed her earnings to \$236,840 in six starts, with three wins, two seconds and a third.

Takethemoneyhoney wins stakes debut in a thriller

Proving she more than belonged in stakes company, Takethemoneyhoney charged to the lead and held on in a tight finish to capture Monmouth Park's \$100,000 Serena's Song Stakes by a nose in her stakes debut May 11.

Only four 4-year-old fillies contested Monmouth's opening weekend stakes for distaffers, with Grade 1 Alabama winner Power Squeeze the 1-2 favorite.

Takethemoneyhoney, second choice at 2-1 and making her first start at two turns, broke sharply under Eliseo Ruiz, got to the rail, and set a steady early tempo in the 1 mile and 70-yard test, carving out fractions of :24.09, :48.76 and 1:13.12. As her rivals

closed in, Takethemoneyhoney held off the fast-finishing Catherine Wheel, the only runner to have beaten her after taking an Aqueduct allowance by a nose.

Power Squeeze, a neck back in third, completed the photo. Final time was 1:42.19 over a fast track.

"Graded stakes is the next step you would think," said trainer Michael Moore, adding: "We always thought this filly could run. When she won her first race by 13½ lengths I remember thinking 'I didn't know she could run like that.' Some horses have the ability but not the gameness. She has it all."

A daughter of Northview Stallion Station's Golden Lad,



Equi-Photo, Inc.

Takethemoneyhoney is a homebred for Kasey K Racing Stable, Final Turn Racing Stable and Michael Day. She has a record of 5-4-1-0 and earnings of \$171,770.

She is the first foal for stakes winner Goodonehoney, a Maryland-bred daughter of

Great Notion bred by Kasey K and campaigned for the same partnership as her daughter. Goodonehoney won the 2018 Weber City Miss Stakes in her second start and retired with earnings of \$193,098 from 10 starts.



MARYLAND FOAL REPORT

ACCESS TO THE MOON, by Malibu Moon, ch.c., April 14, by Cupid. Eric Long. Mare to War Front.

ALECKA STAR, by Magesticperfection, b.f., April 14, by Eclipticalspraline. Maria Haire.

ALICE HARPER, by Overanalyze, b.f., Jan. 28, by Yaupon. The Elkstone Group LLC.

AMBER EMPRESS, by R H F Golden Globe, gr./ro.f., Feb. 15, by Friesan Fire. Erana Kim Shattock.

ANNIE TRUST, by Super Ninety Nine, b.f., April 14, by Thousand Words. Barak Farm.

ANOTHERLOVEOFMINE, by Not For Love, b.c., April 1, by Endorsed. Jason Cole.

ANYDAYISMYDAY, by Afleet Alex, ch.c., Feb. 8, by Army Mule. Glenangus Farm LLC. Mare to Drain the Clock.

ATHWAAQ, by City Zip, b.f., March 15, by Engage. Matt Kilstein.

ATLANTIC AVENUE, by Any Given Saturday, b.c., April 30, by Madefromlucky. Charles McGill.

AVIARY, by Dance With Ravens, ch.c., Feb. 27, by Irish War Cry. Mr. and Mrs. Charles McGinnes.

BELLS IRISH FANCY, by Dunkirk, ch.f., April 30, by Vekoma. Leo Holt Angelinos Racing.

BELLS OF WAR, by Declaration of War, ch.c., March 15, by Tiz the Law. Marie Trombetta and Commonwealth New Era Racing.

BRANDON'SMYLAWYER, by Astern (Aus), b.c., April 7, by Street Sense. The Elkstone Group LLC.

BUNTING, by Bandbox, b.f., April 25, by Gift Box. Hillwood Stables LLC. Mare to Engage.

CABBAGE PATCH GAL, by Not For Love, b.f., March 21, by Cupid. Leslie Elizabeth Wilson.

CAUGHT DREAM'N, by Blame, b.f., March 16, by Army Mule. Dark Hollow Farm, D. Brown, Mr. and Mrs. D. Schwaber and Mr. and Mrs. A. Davidov. Mare to Omaha Beach.

CLEVER GIRL, by Biondetti, b.f., Feb. 21, by Great Notion. Walter Vieser.

CODE NAME TAURUS, by Bullsbay, b.c., April 15, by Engage. Erika Neuberg.

COMBAT QUEEN, by Congrats, ch.f., March 17, by Vekoma.

Country Life Farm and Combat Queen Broodmare LLC.

CONJECTURE, by Great Notion, b.f., March 25, by Divining Rod. Dan Eubanks.

CRYSTA'S COURT, by Silent Name (Jpn), b.f., April 9, by Great Notion. Dr. Megan L. Kerford.

CURLIN'S FOX, by Curlin, b.f., April 1, by Life Is Good. The Elkstone Group LLC.

DANICA (IRE), by Warrior's Reward, b.c., April 20, by Mandaloun. Jann P. Anderson.

DARE TO BE, by Successful Appeal, b.f., May 5, by Endorsed. Hillwood Stable LLC. Mare to Friesan Fire.

DELIGHTFULLSTORM, by Stormy Atlantic, ch.c., April 22, by Irish War Cry. Glengar Farm.

DETERMINED HONOR, by Honor Code, b.f., April 4, by Knicks Go. Tanterra Stables.

DIBBLE DASH, by Jump Start, b.f., April 9, by Holy Boss. Sarah Wingfield and William B. Bayne Jr. Mare to Blofeld.

DON'T CALL ME MARY, by El Padrino, b.c., April 4, by Jackie's Warrior. The Elkstone Group LLC.

ECLIPTICAL MARY, by In Summation, b.f., Jan. 25, by Great Notion. Maria Haire.

ECLIPTICALSROSETTE, by Storm Wolf, dk.b./br.c., Jan. 11, by Colonel Liam. Maria Haire.

EMPRESS MONTEZ, by Shakin It Up, dk.b./br.c., April 27, by Endorsed. Maria Haire.

EXPECT THE SUNRISE, by Vancouver (Aus), gr./ro.c., Jan. 27, by Knicks Go. Mr. and Mrs. Charles McGinnes.

FIFTEEN MOONS, by Malibu Moon, ch.f., March 28, by Known Agenda. Country Life Farm and Fifteen Moons LLC.

FIFTEEN ROYALS, by Palace Malice, b.c., Feb. 4, by Maximus Mischief. Country Life Farm and Fifteen Royals Broodmare LLC.

FLUXX, by Bluegrass Cat, dk.b./br.f., April 23, by Cupid. Holly House Farm.

FLY, by Brilliant Speed, b.f., May 10, by Loggins. Dark Hollow Farm.

GIANT STELLA, by Giant Surprise, b.c., March 5, by Cloud Computing. Elisabeth Cope-land.

GIGGLES, by Not For Love, b.c., March 1, by Great Notion. Mr. and Mrs. Charles McGinnes.

GIULIANA VEE, by Into Mischief, b.c., April 13, by Blofeld. Warning Drums Racing LLC.

GLACKETY, by Smoke Glacken, dk.b./br.f., March 20, by Dialed In. Barak Farm.

GLAMOUR PUSS, by Catienus, b.c., April 27, by Maximus Mischief. Mike Palmer.

GLITTERING JUDY, by Kantharos, b.c., Jan. 22, by Drain the Clock. Tanterra Stables.

GOLD FINCH, by Golden Lad, b.f., Feb. 26, by Great Notion. Hillwood Stable LLC. Mare to Blofeld.

GOOD MEASURE, by Smarty Jones, b.c., May 1, by Vino Rosso. Glenangus Farm LLC. Mare to Oscar Performance.

GRECIAN MAIDEN, by Ghostzapper, b.f., Jan. 26, by Friesan Fire. Country Life Farm and Grecian Maiden II LLC.

GRUDGEHOLDER (GB), by Kodiak, b.c., Jan. 27, by Demarchelier (GB). The Elkstone Group LLC.

GULF COAST BREEZE, by Stormy Atlantic, b.c., Feb. 26, by Endorsed. Bryan Minnich.

HAILEY'S FLIP, by Archarcharch, b.f., Feb. 20, by Maximus Mischief. Daniel C. Crowley and Non Stop Stable.

HEY LAURA, by Hey Chub, b.c., March 31, by Engage. Richard Zaborowski.

HOT FUN, by Latent Heat, ch.c., Feb. 23, by Two Phil's. Randy Ridgely and Gary Ridgely.

HOT SPICE, by Mosler, dk.b./br.f., April 9, by Divining Rod. Randy Ridgely.

IN IT FOR THE GOLD, by Speightstown, b.f., March 12, by Mandaloun. Country Life Farm and In It for the Gold Broodmare LLC.

INVEST WISELY, by Justify, b.c., March 22, by Jack Christopher. The Elkstone Group LLC.

IRISH GAL, by Cape Blanco (Ire), ch.f., April 9, by Fulsome. DMC Racing Stable LLC and James B. Steele.

IZZYBELLA, by Cross Traffic, ch.c., April 15, by Volatile. Eagle Racing.

JENNEMILY, by Strong Mandate, b.c., April 11, by Mandaloun. Country Life Farm and Jennemily LLC.

JOY, by Pure Prize, b.c., April 5, by Upstart. Dark Hollow Farm. Mare to Great Notion.

JOY IN JERUSALEM, by Temple City, ch.f., Feb. 14, by Hightail. Warning Drums Racing LLC.

JUDYMOON, by Two Punch, ch.f., March 7, by Engage. Cathy Denelsbeck.

JUST DESSERTS, by Outflanker, b.c., April 6, by Great Notion. The Stables at Mezza Luna LLC. Mare to Great Notion.

JUST ONCE MORE, by Bandbox, ch.c., March 6, by Uncle Lino.

Mr. and Mrs. Charles McGinnes.

KATIE'S BRAT, by Madefromlucky, ch.c., April 21, by Golden Lad. Charles C. D. McGill.

KITTYLUCK, by Exchange Rate, b.c., April 9, by Golden Lad. Best A Luck Farm.

LAGOM, by Ghostzapper, b.f., Jan. 16, by Connect. The Elkstone Group LLC.

LAST KISS, by Lemon Drop Kid, b.c., April 25, by Great Notion. Mr. and Mrs. A. John Price.

LAST LOVE, by Not For Love, b.c., Feb. 7, by Independence Hall. Wendy Komlo and Drew Komlo.

LITTLE LAUGHS, by Algorithms, b.f., March 2, by Galawi (Ire). Joe Procopio.

LOVE'S LEGEND, by Not For Love, ch.f., Jan. 29, by Tapiture. Jerry Knauer.

MAYBE I WILL, by Will Take Charge, b.c., Feb. 6, by Bolt d'Oro. Country Life Farm and Maybe I Will Broodmare LLC.

MIDNIGHT DRAGON, by Flatter, dk.b./br.f., March 17, by Cyberknife. James F. Thames.

MISS FREEZE, by Frost Giant, b.f., March 5, by Tiz the Law. The Elkstone Group LLC.

MISS HERMES, by Lemon Drop Kid, b.f., April 15, by Golden Lad. Chad Ahalt.

MISS MARGARET, by Bwana Charlie, b.c., April 18, by Cairo Prince. Maria Haire.

MISS NONDESCRIPT, by Mosler, b.f., Jan. 29, by Mandaloun. Country Life Farm and Miss Nondescript LLC.

MISSY RULES, by Peace Rules, b.c., May 1, by Greatest Honour. Country Life Farm and Michael Stone.

MISTY'S LASS, by Golden Years, b.f., April 11, by Golden Lad. Hillwood Stables LLC. Mare to Great Notion.

MISTY TASTE, by Verrazano, b.c., Feb. 25, by Endorsed. Jessica Wilson.

MUST BE FATE, by Eurosilver, b.f., March 21, by Endorsed. Best A Luck Farm.

NICKYROCKSFORPOPS, by Rock Slide, b.f., April 16, by Fortune Ticket. William T. Shook.

NO, by Animal Kingdom, b.f., March 28, by Nashville. Dark Hollow Farm. Mare to Engage.

NO SATIS ACTION, by Action This Day, b.c., April 13, by Karakontie (Jpn). Warning Drums Racing LLC.

OH WHAT A DELITE, by Rock Slide, b.f., March 7, by Blofeld. Wendy M. Komlo.

OL SANISH, by Curlin, gr./ro.c., Feb. 12, by The Factor. James B. Steele Jr. Revocable Living Trust. Mare to Galawi.

OUR BELLA NICOLE, by Honor Code, dk.b./br.c., Feb. 4, by Outwork. Marie F. Trombetta.

OUR FIRST GIRL, by War Front, b.c., April 26, by Brody's Cause. Lee H. Vosters.

OUR GIN MILL, by Go for Gin, b.c., March 5, by Kobe's Back. Make My Day Stable. Mare to Kobe's Back.

OUR LOVE TAP, by Tapit, b.c., Feb. 25, by Eclipticalspraline. Maria Haire.

OUR SWEET GIRL, by Competitive Edge, ch.c., Feb. 28, by Golden Lad. Matthew Groff.

PALACE LUSH, by Palace Malice, b.f., March 27, by Mosler. Daniel G Eubanks.

PEACH OF A GAL, by Curlin, b.f., April 26, by Bolt d'Oro. Glenangus Farm LLC. Mare to Practical Joke.

PERFECT LOVER, by Not For Love, b.c., March 25, by Divining Rod. Jennifer Rowland Small.

PORONUI, by Pioneer of the Nile, b.f., March 14, by Mendelssohn. Barak Farm.

PORT AUTHORITY, by Stormy Atlantic, b.f., Feb. 28, by Blofeld. Goodson Jameson LLC. Mare to Cupid.

PROPER STORM, by Bourbon Courage, ch.c., March 27, by Galawi (Ire). Glenangus Farm LLC. Mare to Galawi (Ire).

RAINBOW BRIGHT, by Suave, b.f., April 9, by Eclipticalspraline. Maria Haire.

REACHREACHREACH, by Archarcharch, dk.b./br.f., Feb. 22, by Mosler. Ed Hart.

ROSIE BELLE, by Trappe Shot, ch.c., Feb. 24, by Vekoma. Karmac Stables LLC.

ROSIE O' DARLIN, by Wiseman's Ferry, b.c., March 26, by Endorsed. David Krasnoff.

ROTATE, by Orb, dk.b./br.c., March 18, by Mosler. Adele B. Dilschneider.

SAINTS PAYNTER, by Paynter, b.c., Jan. 5, by Engage. Konrad Wayson.

SCENARIO ANALYSIS, by Exchange Rate, ch.c., March 20, by Corniche. Carl Lanier.

SELF ASSURED, by Tale of the Cat, b.c., March 15, by Cupid. Hillwood Stables LLC. Mare to Endorsed.

SERENA'S JOY, by Forestry, b.f., April 10, by Game Winner. Warning Drums Racing LLC.

SHIFRA MAGICIAN, by Street Magician, ch.c., April 19, by Engage. Lynn Allane Ashby.

SHIMMERING ASPEN, by Malibu Moon, b.c., April 1, by Maclean's Music. Hillwood Stable LLC. Mare to Maxfield.

SHINY CHROME, by California Chrome, ch.f., March 7, by Engage. Tony and March Bowling.

SILVER SIDES, by Bandbox, b.c., April 18, by Vekoma. Dark Hollow Farm and Hillwood

Stables LLC. Mare to Great Notion.

SOKIE, by Indian Charlie, b.c., Jan. 30, by Violence. The Elkstone Group LLC.

SOMMER SOMETHING, by Etched, gr./ro.f., April 27, by Kobe's Back. Bonita Farm. Mare to Kobe's Back.

STONERAGEOUS, by Smoke Glacken, ch.c., Feb. 17, by Tonalist. Black Star Stable.

STORMY MISTRESS, by Stormy Atlantic, ch.c., Feb. 4, by Blofeld. Komlo LLC.

SUSAN ELAINE, by Hold Me Back, b.f., Feb. 19, by Eclipticalspraline. Maria M. Haire.

SWEET AND CHEEKY, by Candy Ride (Arg), b.f., March 20, by Mitole. Valencia Leach.

TACONIC VICTORY, by Edington, b.f., March 28, by Cupid. Leslie Elizabeth Wilson.

TALULLA GRACE, by Goldencents, b.f., March 21, by Blofeld. Timothy J. Rooney. Mare to Blofeld.

TEMPRESS CALLING, by Temple City, b.c., Feb. 5, by Hopportunity. Trinity West Stables.

THAT'S SOME KISS, by Golden Lad, b.c., March 11, by Divining Rod. Mr. and Mrs. Charles McGinnes.

THE GLENMORE, by Distorted Humor, b.c., April 3, by Mystic Guide. The Elkstone Group LLC.

TIMELESS TREASURE, by Drosselmeyer, ch.f., Feb. 1, by Cyberknife. R.D.M. Racing Stable.

TIZ A BELLE, by Tiznow, b.c., Jan. 19, by Americanrevolution. Valencia Leach.

TOPAZIO, by More Than Ready, ch.f., Feb. 16, by Blofeld. Mr. and Mrs. Charles McGinnes.

TRI AGAIN, by Creative Cause, b.f., Jan. 31, by Eclipticalspraline. Maria Haire.

TRIPSCAR, by Stroll, b.c., Feb. 12, by Mosler. Barak Farm.

TRUANCY, by Run Away and Hide, b.c., Feb. 4, by Cyberknife. Country Life Farm and Truancy Broodmare LLC.

TUNNEL STRIKE, by English Channel, b.f., May 15, by Cupid. Timothy Rooney. Mare to Cupid.

UNTILTHEREWASYOU, by Big Brown, gr./ro.c., Feb. 1, by Frosted. Mr. and Mrs. Charles McGinnes.

WILD SUCCESS, by Violence, b.f., May 5, by Charlatan. The Elkstone Group LLC.

WRITING, by Mass Media, b.c., March 14, by Friesan Fire. Charles and Theresa Freeland.

YOUNGOTTABEKITTEN, by Kitten's Joy, b.f., March 19, by Mitole. Samotowka Stables.

ZEKARA, by Curlin, dk.b./br.f., March 13, by Cairo Prince. Barak Farm and Dino's Thorougbreds LLC.



MARYLAND FUND STAKES RECAPS



JimMcCue

B.g., 2019, Street Magician—Heaven Knows What, by Holy Bull. Bred by R. Larry Johnson; owned by Ken Ramsey; trained by Nolan Ramsey. Foaled at Roland Farm, Chestertown, Md.

Lifetime				
starts	1st	2nd	3rd	earnings
28	6 (2)	5	8 (2)	\$381,890 (through June 21)

2023: 3rd Maryland Million Turf Sprint S. **2024:** 1st \$75,000 Ben's Cat S, 6 fur., turf, registered Md.-bred or sired, 3 & up, Laurel, July 14.

Whenigettoheaven



Ben's Cat Stakes

\$100,000-guaranteed, 6 fur., turf, registered Maryland or Virginia-bred or sired, 3 & up. Laurel Park, June 21.

Whenigettoheaven returned to form while defending his title in the \$100,000 Ben's Cat Stakes at Laurel Park June 21, by three-quar-

ters of a length over Determined Kingdom.

The 6-furlong restricted turf contest kicked off the summer stakes program for registered Maryland-breds and/or Maryland-sired or Virginia-breds and/or Virginia-sired. Named for the Maryland-bred Hall of Famer, the race drew a field of 10 – nine Maryland-breds and one Virginia-bred, the latter race favorite Determined Kingdom, purchased by Larry Johnson for \$190,000 at last November's Keeneland sale.

Johnson bred and campaigned Whenigettoheaven, and lost him when the gelding was claimed for \$62,500 by owner Ken Ramsey in March 2024. Ramsey turned the new addition over to his grandson Nolan Ramsey, and the son of Street Magician became the trainer's first stakes winner in last year's Ben's Cat.

Whenigettoheaven has had a history of winless streaks, the most recent were

six losses – although he placed four times – between the Ben's Cat runs. This year's edition saw Tidewater, runner-up in the 2024 Ben's Cat, speed to the early lead, completing the opening quarter-mile in :23.73, with Determined Kingdom second and Whenigettoheaven, under J.G. Torrealba, settling in third.

Determined Kingdom colared the leader as they entered the stretch and the Johnson family runner looked a winner in midstretch, but Whenigettoheaven was gradually reeling him in. He drew alongside near the three-sixteenths pole and carried the momentum to the wire to win in 1:09.57, returning \$10 to win as the second choice.

Among his races since last July were close seconds in two handicaps and a third in the \$100,000 King T. Leatherbury in April. He now has six victories and a bankroll of \$381,890 from 28 career starts.

Whenigettoheaven descends from Johnson's foundation broodmare Ran's Chick on both sides of his pedigree. Ran's Chick's daughter Special Kell – the same branch of the family as 2024 Maryland-bred champion 3-year-old male and Grade 1 winner Mindframe, as well as 2024 Maryland-bred champions Future Is Now and Call Another Play – is the second dam of Street Magician, a graded stakes-winning sprinter bred and owned by Johnson.

Whenigettoheaven is the fourth of seven foals of racing age, and one of six winners, for multiple stakes-winning turf sprinter Heaven Knows What. A daughter of Holy Bull, Heaven Knows What is from the female line of Ran's Chick's first foal, the Red Monk mare Whatwouldhappenif. Johnson sold Heaven Knows What at the 2021 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic December sale for \$25,000, in foal to Upstart.

Lifelovenlaughter



Jameela Stakes

\$100,000-guaranteed, 6 fur., turf, registered Maryland or Virginia-bred or sired fillies and mares, 3 & up. Laurel Park, June 21.



JimMcCue

B.m., 2020, Lemon Drop Kid—Too Foofoo for You, by Freud. Bred and owned by The Elkstone Group (Stuart Grant); trained by Mike Trombetta. Foaled at C-Dog Farm, Chesapeake City, Md.

	Lifetime			
starts	1st	2nd	3rd	earnings
19	5 (1)	3	2	\$306,425
(through June 21)				

2025: 1st \$100,000 Jameela S, 6 fur., turf, registered Md. or Va.-bred or sired fillies and mares, 3 & up, Laurel, June 21.

Cutting back to a sprint for the first time since her debut in August 2022, 5-year-old Lifelovenlaughter proved she could battle with the best of the speedsters after putting aside stakes-winning favorite Bosserati and holding off defending champion Alla Breve to come out a 1-length winner in the 6-furlong Jameela at Laurel Park June 21.

A homebred for Stuart Grant's The Elkstone Group making her 19th start, Lifelovenlaughter entered the turf

stakes having hit the board in seven of 14 turf attempts. Running in stakes company for the first time since August 2023, the Mike Trombetta-trainee had most recently won a 1 $\frac{1}{16}$ -mile turf allowance at Laurel June 6, more than four months after her 2025 debut at Gulfstream Park, her only other start this year.

The \$100,000 Jameela attracted six Maryland-bred distaffers, with Bosserati top choice off a victory in Pimlico's The Very One Stakes on Preakness weekend. Bosserati led through the opening quarter in :23.54 while pushed by Lifelovenlaughter, and got the half in :46.27.

Bosserati, a non-winner at the distance in five tries, had Lifelovenlaughter stuck on her hip to the outside turning for home. Jorge Ruiz urged Lifelovenlaughter to the front as they entered the stretch, with the rest of the field closing in. Lifelovenlaughter proved strongest to the wire in 1:10.01 over firm turf. She paid \$14.60 to win as the fourth choice.

"We tried her down at South Florida last year, and she struggled a little bit there," Trombetta said after the race. "Stuart and I talked

about her at the end of the season because she is getting to that point [whether] to breed her or kick on. I [told him] that she's pretty solid, and hopefully we could get her stakes-placed, and we'll be OK."

It was the Lemon Drop Kid mare's first stakes win.

"There's only a couple of Maryland-bred [races] on the radar for these kind of horses and this was one of them," Trombetta said. "I knew the cutback might be risky, but she ran really good."

The first foal out of the Freud mare Too Foofoo for You, Lifelovenlaughter has five wins and earnings of \$306,425.

The Elkstone Group purchased Too Foofoo for You, a full-sister to stakes winner Dr. Shane, at the Saratoga New York-bred sale as a yearling for \$57,000. Counting a second at Belmont in one of her three starts, the mare was an RNA at Keeneland November with the future stakes winner in utero. She sold the next year at the same sale, in foal to Include, for \$5,500 to Korean interests. The family includes Grade 1 winner Jose Binn.



MARYLAND FUND REPORT

Bonuses paid for races run in March 2025 at Maryland tracks

Conniver Stakes

March 8. Purse \$75,000-guaranteed. For 4-year-olds and up, fillies and mares, registered Maryland-bred or Maryland sired. 7 fur. 9 competed. (Closed with 20 nominations.) Winner: STICK-WITHTHECOLORS, by Divining Rod. Breeder bonus: John E. Williamson III (\$10,125). Stallion bo-

nus: Divining Rod Syndicate (\$3,375). Second: MALIBU MOONSHINE, by Bourbon Courage. Breeder bonus: Dr. Ronald Harris Parker (\$3,375). Stallion bonus: Bourbon Courage Syndicate (\$1,125). Third: GOLD DIGGING BROAD, by Mineshaft. Breeder bonus: LRM Stable LLC (\$1,687.50). Stallion bonus: None.

Not For Love Stakes

March 8. Purse \$75,000-guaranteed. For 4-year-olds and up, registered Maryland-bred or Maryland sired. 6 fur. 7 competed. (Closed with 17 nominations.) Winner: CIRCLE P, by Speightster. Breeder bonus: Marathon Farms Inc. (\$10,125). Stallion bonus: None. Second: S S SINATRA, by Desert Party. Breeder bonus: Janice Sinatra (\$3,375). Stallion bonus: None. Third: SPEEDY-NESS, by Great Notion. Breeder bonus: Jagger Inc. (\$1,687.50). Stallion bonus: Great Notion Syndicate (\$562.50).

Breeder bonuses

Includes the additional 10 percent Maryland-sired bonus for winners of maiden races, initiated Jan. 1 during the 2022 Laurel winter meet. That bonus is reflected in the second figure earned for the race.

A. Delaperriere Stables LLC—Docsgotallthecandy: March 22, 6th race, \$495.

Anchor and Hope Farm Inc.—Sacred Thunder: March 22, 8th race, \$4,500. She'sarollingstone: March 23, 4th race, \$1,305. (\$5,805)

Robert Atkinson and Mary Atkinson—Minister: March 1, 3rd race, \$742.50.

Barak Farm—Hateful: March 23, 1st race, \$810. Royal Whisper: March 28, 2nd race, \$4,995. Safe Trust: March 22, 7th race, \$13,500. Vodkatini: March 9, 6th race, \$1,102.50. (\$20,407.50)

Barak Farm and Dinos Thoroughbreds LLC—Shkhara Fire: March 8, 5th race, \$1,417.50; March 28, 7th race, \$2,205. Skip Thru Da Fire: March 2, 4th race, \$1,102.50; March 28, 2nd race, \$1,665. (\$6,390)

Barlar LLC—Align: March 1, 5th race, \$990; March 22, 9th race, \$990. (\$1,980)

Bell Gable Stable—Can Do: March 9, 3rd race, \$2,970.

Black Cloud Racing LLC—She's a Gem: March 22, 5th race, \$495.

Charles Blanford—Bourbon N Lace: March 29, 7th race, \$585. Crabcakes N Beer: March 7, 2nd race, \$742.50. (\$1,327.50)

Bonita Farm—Hittheroadjak: March 21, 7th race, \$7,155. Mamba Mindset: March 8, 9th race, \$922.50; March 22, 9th race, \$495. (\$8,572.50)

Bowman and Higgins Stable—Master of None: March 2, 6th race, \$2,430.

Deborah A. Butts—Gilda's Girl: March 21, 1st race, \$1,350.

William Andrew Campbell—Bad Temper: March 1, 1st race, \$810; March 23, 1st race, \$405. (\$1,215)

Dennis A. Cardoza—Captain Cardo: March 29, 6th race, \$810.

Clover Hill Racing LLC—Super Needy: March 7, 3rd race, \$2,970.

Cordelia Stables LLC—Krissi N: March 1, 6th race, \$2,205.

Country Life Farm, Sue Ann Mancilla and Susan Scheffres—Divine Child: March 7, 4th race, \$4,050.

Country Life Farm and Missy Rules LLC—Missy's Map: March 29, 2nd race, \$990.

Country Life Farm and Moon Vision Broodmare LLC—Creed's Vision: March 9, 2nd race, \$1,845.

Country Life Farm and Rock Sapphire LLC—Sapphire Beauty: March 2, 1st race, \$2,430.

Daniel C. Crowley and Non Stop Stable—Haileysfirstnotion: March 23, 7th race, \$6,480.

Dark Hollow Farm—Haleigh B: March 1, 4th race, \$2,430; March 22, 3rd race, \$2,700.

Stormy Hollow: March 28, 8th race, \$495.

Wikolia Lady: March 8, 6th race, \$1,485. (\$7,110)

Cynthia J. Darrah-Hipple—Lady Zeta: March 30, 7th race, \$3,915.

Rebecca B. Davis—Great Andrei: March 8, 5th race, \$2,835.

John C. Davison—War Master: March 29, 4th race, \$6,615.

George L. Doetsch—Big Wanda: March 29, 9th race, \$1,350. Straight to Water: March 30, 3rd race, \$5,535/\$1,845. (\$8,730)

Finale Farm, Mr. and Mrs. D. David Moose and Lone Pond Farm LLC—Rick'swarmheart: March 22, 9th race, \$2,970.

Charles A. Frock—Tam Char: March 2, 1st race, \$810.

Glenangus Farm LLC—First Pearl: March 29, 7th race, \$1,170.

Grandview Stable Inc. and Dominick J. Juno—Dolice Vita: March 1, 7th race, \$540.

Sheryl Grant—Heaven's Got Fire: March 29, 8th race, \$1,192.50.

Greycross Stable LLC—Seaside Road: March 7, 1st race, \$1,845; March 28, 5th race, \$5,535. (\$7,380)

Richard J. Hackerman—Lachicafortequila: March 1, 9th race, \$2,970.

Maria M. Haire—Elvis Himself: March 23, 7th race, \$2,160.

Michael J. Harrison DVM—Cluck Cluck: March 21, 8th race, \$990; March 29, 9th race, \$4,050. (\$5,040)

HH Stables LLC—Cross of Valor: March 7, 1st race, \$922.50.

Hillwood Stable LLC—Daring Delight: March 28, 5th race, \$922.50.

Jagger Inc.—Berks: March 30, 5th race, \$2,430. Kick Startness: March 22, 1st race, \$405. Sassafrasness: March 7, 1st race, \$5,535. Speedyness: March 8, 8th race, \$1,687.50. (\$10,057.50)

Jagger Inc. and Super C Racing Inc.—Derbyness: March 22, 4th race, \$2,205.

Estate of R. Larry Johnson—Call Another Play: March 21, 6th race, \$7,155. Coringa: March 1, 8th race, \$2,205; March 29, 4th race, \$2,205. Energy Efficient: March 2, 6th race, \$810. Heard On Thetstreet: March 23, 7th race, \$1,080. Medagooch: March 28, 1st race, \$1,350. Quit Quay: March 1, 9th race, \$495; March 21, 8th race, \$2,970. (\$18,270)

Hope Haskell Jones—Moon Cache: March 22, 7th race, \$4,500.

Karmac Stables LLC—Golden Girl Lena: March 2, 8th race, \$2,970/\$990. (\$3,960)

Owen Kiernan—Ade: March 9, 4th race, \$742.50.

Carl Lanier—She's No Uncle: March 1, 6th race, \$1,102.50.

LRM Stable LLC—Gold Digging Broad: March 8, 7th race, \$1,687.50.

Marathon Farm Inc.—Circle P: March 8, 8th race, \$10,125.

Elizabeth M. Merryman—Midnight Renegade: March 8, 1st race, \$2,970; March 29, 6th race, \$405. (\$3,375)

Mike Dalton LLC—Sneaking Suspicion: March 28, 6th race, \$495.

Bryan B. Minnich—King's River: March 7, 6th race, \$405.

Kevin P. Morgan—Mavilus: March 23, 4th race, \$3,915.

Murmur Farm—Bold Diversion: March 7, 2nd race, \$4,455.

No Guts No Glory Farm—Irish Hero: March 22, 2nd race, \$2,970.

David W. Palmer—Kissling: March 22, 6th race, \$2,970.

Charles V. Parker—Missed the Turn: March 9, 2nd race, \$5,535; March 30, 4th race, \$2,205. (\$7,740)

Ronald Harris Parker—Malibu Hooch: March 8, 5th race, \$8,505; Malibu Moonshine: March 8, 7th race, \$3,375. (\$11,880)

D. Scott Peck—Set for Life: March 30, 2nd race, \$1,170.

Frank A. Perri Jr.—Dwelling Legacy: March 28, 4th race, \$855.

A. Leonard Pineau—Crossland: March 21, 7th race, \$1,192.50.

Dr. and Mrs. A. Leonard Pineau—Change My World: March 7, 8th race, \$1,102.50.

Joel Politi—Lightning Boss: March 21, 2nd race, \$1,170.

Valter J. Ramos—Bernie the Star: March 9, 2nd race, \$922.50.

Eric A. Rizer and Nancy M. Rizer—Chickin Lickin: March 2, 5th race, \$1,102.50; March 28, 7th race, \$1,102.50. Slam Notion: March 7, 8th race, \$2,205; March 30, 4th race, \$6,615. (\$11,025)

Thomas J. and Tara L. Rooney—Amazing Bernie: March 1, 2nd race, \$1,170.

Janice Sinatra—S S Sinatra: March 8, 8th race, \$3,375; March 29, 8th race, \$7,155. (\$10,530)

Sinatra Thoroughbred Racing and Breeding LLC—Autumn in Vermont: March 22, 5th race, \$990.

James B. Steele Jr.—Divining Smile: March 8, 6th race, \$4,455/\$1,485. (\$5,940)

Super C Racing Inc.—Dine and Dash: March 2, 3rd race, \$2,970/\$990. Tetched: March 21, 3rd race, \$3,510/\$1,170. Tuned to the Moon: March 2, 2nd race, \$4,455/\$1,485; March 29, 1st race, \$3,510. (\$18,090)

Sycamore Hall Thoroughbreds LLC—Authenticated: March 2, 3rd race, \$495. Hacksaw Ridge: March 8, 9th race, \$5,535. (\$6,030)

The Elkstone Group LLC—Alvy: March 23, 3rd race, \$540.

Thormmar Farm LLC—Admit Nothing: March 8, 1st race, \$495; March 29, 3rd race, \$990.

Born Charmer: March 2, 8th race, \$495; March 23, 5th race, \$495. Fair Trade: March 29, 1st race, \$1,170. Fast Talkin Man: March 21, 5th race, \$495. Just the Thing: March 21, 8th race, \$495; March 29, 9th race, \$675. Nearly a Lady: March 30, 1st race, \$675. The Wolfman: March 7, 6th race, \$2,430. Up in Flames: March 23, 2nd race, \$495. (\$8,910)

Thormmar Farm and Tim Keefe—Regency Tale: March 30, 3rd race, \$1,845.

Two Legends Farm—Devil Pays in Gold: March 30, 6th race, \$2,385.

Walter N. Vieser II—Severn Run: March 21, 3rd race, \$585.

Katharine Merryman Voss—Carolina Flake: March 7, 9th race, \$675. Viennese Waltz: March 9, 6th race, \$6,615. (\$7,290)

David H. Wade—Rominski: March 2, 7th race, \$7,560; March 23, 8th race, \$8,505. (\$16,065)

Estate of Linda M. Walls—Concrete Faze: March 9, 6th race, \$2,205; March 28, 4th race, \$5,130. (\$7,335)

Susan Wantz—Gatto Be Proud: March 7, 4th race, \$675; On a Proud Note: March 2, 8th race, \$990. (\$1,665)

Maryland-bred top earners in 2025

(through June 16)

1. Mindframe	\$644,800	11. Onyx Ten	\$123,000
2. Quint's Brew	260,000	12. Nineteenamendment	114,750
3. Barbadian Runner . . .	233,245	13. Concrete Faze	111,450
4. Passion Rules	189,600	14. Green Eyed Monster .	110,370
5. Future Is Now	187,250	15. Cluck Cluck	105,450
6. Seismic Beauty	176,840	16. Speedyness	103,000
7. Safe Trust	158,780	17. Big Blue Line	102,923
8. Takethemoneyhoney .	141,770	18. Coringa	98,380
9. Malibu Beauty	138,640	19. S S Sinatra	95,810
10. Heard On Thetstreet . .	124,700	20. Rominski	93,760

Warning Drums Racing LLC—Arise My Love: March 28, 5th race, \$1,845.

John E. Williamson III—Stickwiththecolors: March 8, 7th race, \$10,125.

Winding Creek Farm—Whiskey and You: March 29, 5th race, \$1,305.

Stallion bonuses

ALLIANCE (Align: March 1, 5th race, \$330; March 22, 9th race, \$330): Lawrence Karp—\$600.

BANDBOX (The Wolfman: March 7, 6th race, \$810): Northview Stallion Station.

BARBADOS (Hateful: March 23, 1st race, \$270): Shamrock Farm.

BLOFELD (Bold Diversion: March 7, 2nd race, \$1,485. Cross of Valor: March 7, 1st race, \$307.50. Dwelling Legacy: March 28, 4th race, \$285): Blofeld Syndicate—\$2,077.50.

BOURBON COURAGE (Arise My Love: March 28, 5th race, \$615. Malibu Hooch: March 8, 5th race, \$2,835. Malibu Moonshine: March 8, 7th race, \$1,125. She'sarollingstone: March 23, 4th race, \$435): Bourbon Courage Syndicate—\$5,010.

DIVINING ROD (Divine Child: March 7, 4th race, \$1,350. Divining Smile: March 8, 6th race, \$1,485. Stickwiththecolors: March 8, 7th race, \$3,375. Straight to Water: March 30, 3rd race, \$1,845. Vodka: March 9, 6th race, \$367.50): Divining Rod Syndicate—\$8,422.50.

FIRST MONDAYS (First Pearl: March 29, 7th race, \$390): First Mondays Partnership.

FRIESAN FIRE (Shkhara Fire: March 8, 5th race, \$472.50; March 28, 7th race, \$735. Skip Thru Da Fire: March 2, 4th race, \$367.50; March 28, 2nd race, \$555. Up in Flames: March 23, 2nd race, \$165. Whiskey and You: March 29, 5th race, \$435): Friesan Fire Syndicate—\$2,730.

GOLDEN LAD (Amazing Bernie: March 1, 2nd race, \$390. Chickin Lickin: March 2, 5th race, \$367.50; March 28, 7th race, \$367.50. Darling Delight: March 28, 5th race, \$307.50. Elvis Himself: March 23, 7th race, \$720. Golden Girl Lena: March 2, 8th race, \$990. Just the Thing: March 21, 8th race, \$165; March 29, 9th race, \$225. Quit Quay: March 1, 9th race, \$165; March 21, 8th race, \$990. She's a

Gem: March 22, 5th race, \$165): Golden Lad Syndicate—\$4,852.50.

GREAT NOTION (Haileysfirstnotion: March 23, 7th race, \$2,160. Kick Startness: March 22, 1st race, \$135. Rominski: March 2, 7th race, \$2,520; March 23, 8th race, \$2,835. Slam Notion: March 7, 8th race, \$735; March 30, 4th race, \$2,205. Sneaking Suspicion: March 28, 6th race, \$165. Speedyness: March 8, 8th race, \$562.50. Stormy Hollow: March 28, 8th race, \$165. Tam Char: March 2, 1st race, \$270. Tetched: March 21, 3rd race, \$1,170): Great Notion Syndicate—\$12,922.50.

HOLY BOSS (Crossland: March 21, 7th race, \$397.50. Lightning Boss: March 21, 2nd race, \$390. Sacred Thunder: March 22, 8th race, \$1,500): Holy Boss Syndicate—\$2,287.50.

HOPPERTUNITY (Ade: March 9, 4th race, \$247.50. Docsgetalliccandy: March 22, 6th race, \$165. Fair Trade: March 29, 1st race, \$390): Northview Stallion Station Inc.—\$802.50.

IRISH WAR CRY (Born Charmer: March 2, 8th race, \$165; March 23, 5th race, \$165. Irish Hero: March 22, 2nd race, \$990. King's River: March 7, 6th race, \$135. Tuned to the Moon: March 2, 2nd race, \$1,485; March 29, 1st race, \$1,170): Northview Stallion Station, Inc.—\$4,110.

KOBE'S BACK (Hittheroadjak: March 21, 7th race, \$2,385. Mamba Mindset: March 8, 9th race, \$307.50; March 22, 9th race, \$165): Bonita Farm—\$2,857.50.

MOSLER (Can Do: March 9, 3rd race, \$990. Moon Cache: March 22, 7th race, \$1,500. Safe Trust: March 22, 7th race, \$4,500. Sapphire Beauty: March 2, 1st race, \$810): Mosler Syndicate—\$7,800.

STREET MAGICIAN (Heard On Thetstreet: March 23, 7th race, \$360): Estate of R. Larry Johnson.

SUPER NINETY NINE (Bad Temper: March 1, 1st race, \$270; March 23, 1st race, \$135. Concrete Faze: March 9, 6th race, \$735; March 28, 4th race, \$1,710. Dine and Dash: March 2, 3rd race, \$990. Minister: March 1, 3rd race, \$247.50. Super Needy: March 7, 3rd race, \$990): Country Life Farm—\$5,077.50.

UNCLE LINO (Bernie the Star: March 9, 2nd race, \$307.50. She's No Uncle: March 1, 6th race, \$367.50): Northview Stallion Station—\$675.

Registration questions? Membership inquiries?

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- News, views and insights that matter to breeders, owners and racing industry professionals - July/August 2025 -

In This Issue

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Summer's Comin storms home to win Spruce Fir Handicap

Trainer Mike Dini isn't sure what Summer's Comin got out of her seasonal debut at Tampa Bay Downs April 12 because of an awkward start, but he is certain that the nearly four months off she had prior to that race were a huge benefit to the 4-year-old filly.

Returning to Monmouth for her first stakes of the year in the \$90,100 Spruce Fir Handicap for Jersey-breds May 17, she was able to sit a stalking three-wide trip, closer to the early pace than she usually is, and roared past dueling leaders Bel Pensiero and Bingo's Birkin coming out of the final turn to cruise to a 4¼-length victory.

It marked the first stakes win in 20 career starts for the daughter of Summer Front out of Emirates Girl bred by Helen and Joseph Barbazon.

"At Tampa in her last start she got eliminated early," said Dini, who also owns Summer's Comin. "I have to be honest, I did not expect her to be as close as she was. Since I turned her out [from December to early April] she has gotten bigger and stronger. She was only a 3-year-old last year and she was very green and sometimes got intimidated. So she had a lot of room to grow and mature."

"My filly just needed that vacation to get freshened up and mature a little bit."

The winning time for the 6 furlongs was 1:10.34.

Sent off at 16-1 in the field of nine fillies and mares, Summer's Comin and jockey Sonny Leon were able to bide their time as second-choice Bel Pensiero and Bingo's Birkin dueled through early fractions of :22.14 and :45.16 to



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the half. Leon had Summer's Comin just off their flanks wide and in third.

Both Bel Pensiero (fifth) and Bingo's Birkin (seventh) faded as Summer's Comin staged her rally through the stretch.

"I think I had a perfect trip," said Leon, who is riding full-time at

Monmouth for the first time. "I got her clear early, I got her to settled down and I stayed patient. I made my move on the turn to win the race. She broke sharp and was right there. She was right behind them at the perfect time."

Long shot Kate's Cuban Kiss rallied for second, with two-time Spruce Fir winner

Mia's Crusade third, a neck better than even-money favorite Riding Pretty.

Summer's Comin tried Jersey-bred stakes company twice last year, both times in grass races, but failed to hit the board. The victory was the fifth of her career and raised her career earnings to \$236,911.

Monmouth Park executive John Heims recipient of 2025 Virgil "Buddy" Raines Award

Long-time Monmouth Park executive John Heims, currently the track's general manager and in-house counsel, has been named the 2025 recipient of the Virgil "Buddy" Raines Distinguished Achievement Award by Monmouth Park.

The Raines Award, currently in its 30th year, is presented annually prior to Monmouth Park's season opener. It honors men and women who have demonstrated a continuing commitment to the sport of Thoroughbred racing as an owner, trainer or administrator, and whose conduct has been exemplary for professionalism, integrity and service to the sport.

Heims has been at Monmouth Park since 1997, serving in a variety of roles. He started at the Jersey Shore track as the Publicity Assistant, moving on to become the Director of Media Relations, In-House Counsel, Director of Racing/Racing Secretary and General Manager.

He previously worked at Hialeah Park (Publicity Director), Gulfstream Park (Simulcast Director) and Atlantic City Race Course.

"It's a great honor to be placed in the same company with so many of the previous recipients – Willard Thompson, Dennis Drazin, John Forbes, Jan Laszlo, Richard Malouf, Bill Anderson, Mike Musto and all the honorees," Heims said.

"It is a privilege just to be mentioned alongside them.

"Having grown up at the Jersey Shore, Monmouth Park has been the only place I ever wanted to spend my time. To be so lucky and fortunate to work here for nearly 30 years, although when it's a labor of love it's not really work, has been a true blessing."

A graduate of Clemson University, Heims received a graduate degree in Equine Administration from the University of Louisville and a Juris Doctor from Widener University.

He has a private law practice in Toms River.

New Jersey-breds in demand at Fasig-Tipton May sale

The 2025 Fasig-Tipton Midlantic Two-Year-Olds in Training Sale, held on May 20 in Timonium, Md., was a record-setting event, with gross sales exceeding \$44 million. Among the 326 horses sold, three New Jersey-bred juveniles stood out, showcasing the state's breeding program prominently.

The highest price was commanded by a chestnut Uncle Lino colt, purchased by Suited and Booted for \$200,000. Foaled on April 10, 2023, this colt is the second foal out of the winning El Padrino mare Padrinoneverquits, and comes from the

family of multiple graded stakes-winning millionaire Upstart. He was bred by Gina Lupton and Kelly Lupton and will begin his career overseas.

Hip #198, a colt by Vekoma out of multiple stakes-winning Jersey-bred Karmageddon, was purchased for \$160,000 by Dutch Girl Holdings LLC and Irving Ventures LLC. This ownership group also owns Queen Maxima, a multiple graded stakes winner and top female turf sprinter who has earned \$449,460. Karmageddon is the dam of stakes winner Naked Avenger,

as well as successful New Jersey-bred runners Grouch (\$211,354) and Kratos (\$119,036). This colt was bred by Headless Horsemen Racing LLC and Tee N Jay Farm.

Mopo Racing purchased a son of first-year sire Fortune Ticket out of Jazzy Java for \$60,000. Fortune Ticket is a full brother to champion and top sire Gun Runner. The colt was bred by the Luptons and hails from the family of 31-time winner King's Swan (\$1,924,845), Phone the King (\$320,557), and Hi Friend Try (\$976,444).



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Speaking scores three-peat in John J. Reilly Handicap

With Speaking's three-peat in the John J. Reilly Handicap complete, trainer Eddie Owens had a suggestion for the Monmouth Park racing office for the years to come.

"They may have to call this the Speaking Stakes in the future," Owens said.

Speaking, a gelded son of Mr Speaker out of High Noon Nellie, made a strong case for that, springing to the lead out of the gate and going on to an easy 2-length victory over stakes-winning stablemate Great Navigator in the \$85,000 John J. Reilly Handicap for Jersey-breds May 18.

It's the third straight year that Speaking has won the John J. Reilly Handicap and marked his fifth win in New Jersey-restricted stakes company. He also won the Smoke Glacken Stakes as a 2-year-old.

"He's been good a horse for me, but I thought he was capable of being even better," said Owens. "But he has a bleeding issue and you have to manage that. If not for that issue I think he would

have been one of the best sprinters in the country, I really do."

The expected showdown with race favorite No Cents never materialized when the Cal Lynch runner – second to Speaking in this race the past two years – was left at the gate. He eventually rallied to be third, just a half-length behind Great Navigator.

"I don't want to take anything away from [No Cents] but we got a pretty easy lead and it worked out for us," said winning rider Jorge A. Vargas Jr.

With the win, the 6-year-old Speaking, a Holly Crest Farm homebred, posted his eighth win from 21 career starts. He is 8-for-13 overall at Monmouth Park, and 7-for-12 at 6 furlongs.

The winning time was 1:10.97.

Speaking made short work of his five rivals, bolting to the lead through a :22.83 opening quarter and reaching the half in :46.55.

There was never a serious challenge to him.

"My instructions were to come out of there running," said Owens. "I know No Cents is fast but he couldn't catch us and beat us last year or the year before. I'm not taking anything away from No Cents but the only way you are going to beat him is to be ahead of him, not behind him."

"If No Cents would have gone with us and not gotten left I think we would have learned a little more about how Speaking has come back this year. He had it all his own way today. He ran the way I expected to him to run."

"It feels good, more so because of Eddie," said Vargas. "I'm a huge fan of Eddie. I like how he works with his horses, and I always try to team up with him. Luckily, we did for this race and it worked out."

"My horse, he breaks. Great Navigator is a great horse, but they were both feeling great. They had the same training schedule, so they were 100 percent ready for this race. I'm just happy I was the winner."



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THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

Membership Application

Member Information

NAME

SS#/FEDERAL I.D.#

ADDRESS

CITY

STATE

ZIP

COUNTY

TELEPHONE:

E-MAIL:

Membership Categories

☐

Breeder

A breeder member shall be a person who owns the required interest in a broodmare or registered stallion domiciled in New Jersey; who submits an application for membership, and pays the membership dues. A breeder member shall have voting rights.

☐

Owner

An owner member shall be a person who owns a registered New Jersey- bred; who submits an application for membership, and pays the membership dues. An owner member will not have voting rights.

☐

Associate

An associate member is a person who is interested in owning, breeding, or racing horses in the State of New Jersey or in fostering economic activity through the breeding, ownership and/or racing of horses in the State of New Jersey. An associate member will not have voting rights.

Date:

Signature:

Membership Dues

A check or money order for \$100.00 must accompany this form. Spouses are encouraged to join the **TBANJ** under joint membership status. This fee would total \$150.00 per couple. Each spouse must fill out a separate form to accompany the payment. Membership will be effective upon receipt and will be in force each calendar year and must be renewed annually.

THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS' ASSOCIATION OF NEW JERSEY

265 Hwy 36

Suite 1R

W. Long Branch, NJ 07764

732-542-8880

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North Carolina



THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION

July / August 2025

President's message

Happy vacation to all. I hope everyone has a safe time during the coming months. Please remember to submit your membership applications to continue to receive the *Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred* magazine.

Should you have any questions, please do not hesitate to contact me at 336-622-3089 or email bherring@rtelco.net. I look forward to hearing from you.

Bonnie Herring
NCTA President

Spotlight



In Your Life, bred by Nancy Shufford.
Winner by daylight at Louisiana Downs
on May 11, going a mile and 70 yards on
the main track. Congratulations Nancy!

Hitting the Board

May 5 – June 4, 2025

Date	Horse	Track	NCTA Connection	Results
11-May	In Your Life	Louisiana Downs	Bred by Nancy Shufford	WINNER!
12-May	Come on Arlene	Thistledown	Owned by Caroline Cooper	unplaced
14-May	Colonel Cooper	Belterra Park	Owned By Caroline Cooper	3rd
16-May	Rockaway Reef	Churchill Downs	Bred By Denise Walsh	unplaced
17-May	Tiz Sweet Emotion	Belterra Park	Bred & Owned By Denise Walsh	2nd
17-May	Contrivance	Woodbine	Bred & Owned By William Thompson, Jr	WINNER!
17-May	Double Tough Tiger	Camarero Race Track	Bred By Beth Muirhead	unplaced
20-May	Hartful Hope	Thistledown	Bred By Art Bauer	2nd
20-May	O'Conner Sunset	Mountaineer	Owned by Arlee Arkofa	2nd
21-May	Foxy Cleopatra	Presque Isle Downs	Bred By Nancy Shufford	2nd
23-May	Nabokov	Churchill Downs	Bred By Frank Batten	unplaced
24-May	Mom's Martini	Gulfstream Park	Owned By Dan Shea-Shea D Boy's Stable	WINNER!
24-May	Champagne Camie	Los Alamitos	Bred By Beth Muirhead	3rd
25-May	Flat Out Flying	Belmont at the Big A	Bred By Beth Muirhead & Frank Coniglio	unplaced
27-May	Tiz Wicked Strong	Horseshoe Indianapolis	Bred by Denise Walsh	3rd
28-May	Colonel Cooper	Thistledown	Owned By Caroline Cooper	unplaced
29-May	Come on Arlene	Thistledown	Owned By Caroline Cooper	unplaced
29-May	Magic Token	Woodbine	Owned By William Thompson Jr.	unplaced
29-May	Managing Mischief	Hawthorne	Owned by Caroline Cooper in partnership	unplaced
29-May	Foxy Cleopatra	Hawthorne	Bred by Nancy Shufford	WINNER!
29-May	Faultfinder	Woodbine	Owned By Bill Thompson	unplaced
29-May	Magic Token	Woodbine	Owned by William Thompson Jr.	unplaced
31-May	Motion Granted	Woodbine	Bred & Owned By William Thompson Jr	unplaced

Race Results

IN YOUR LIFE - WINNER at Louisiana Downs, May 11; 1 mile and 70 yards on the dirt. Track sloppy (sealed). Final Time 1:45.43. Raced mid-pack on the inside, advanced to the tum, angled out, drew off at the eighth pole, encouraged with the whip and drifted out to get the win by 4½ lengths.

CONTRIVANCE - WINNER at Woodbine, May 17; 7 furlongs on the all weather track. Track fast. Final Time 1:23.40. Loose on the lead down the backside, unopposed while still in hand through the tum, spurted away at the quarter pole and cruised to the win.

MOM'S MARTINI - WINNER at Gulfstream, May 24; 1¼ miles on the all weather track. Track fast. Final Time 1:43.63. Prompted the pace two wide, at half-mile marker vied for lead, took over at the five-sixteenths, ran clear leaving the tum, drew out to the wire for the 3-length win.

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North Carolina Thoroughbred Association

2025 MEMBERSHIP FORM

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CITY _____ STATE _____ ZIP _____
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PHONE: HOME _____ CELL _____ WORK _____

- ☐ Jr. MEMBER - AGE 21 UNDER @ -0 ☐ FARM @ \$80.00 ☐ CORPORATE SPONSOR @ \$250.00
☐ INDIVIDUAL @ \$55.00 ☐ SPONSOR @ \$140.00
☐ NON-PROFIT HORSE ASSOCIATIONS @ \$20.00 (covers cost of magazines)

Membership includes subscriptions to Mid-Atlantic Thoroughbred Magazine

ADDITIONAL INFORMATION: Involvement in the Thoroughbred Industry
(Please check any or all pertaining to you)

- ☐ Breeder ☐ Racing ☐ Steeplechase ☐ Boarding ☐ Foaling
☐ Lay-ups ☐ Race Training ☐ Racing Fan ☐ Showing ☐ Show Training
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PLEASE MAKE CHECK PAYABLE TO: N.C.T.A.
MAIL WITH COMPLETED APPLICATION TO: **Bonnie Herring,**
436 Sam Lowe Road, Siler City, NC 27344

YOUR NAME OR FARM NAME _____

HORSES IN TRAINING - 2025

Please list the horses you have BRED or OWN that are in training or racing. The Association will put them into our stable on Daily Racing Form. We will keep up with them through this medium and have news for the association and for the Mid-Atlantic. We will only use horses that finish in the money.

This will let us know what our members are doing on the racing front and inform everyone about your successes.

I will still have to trust you to keep us informed regarding the breeding. I love receiving news on how the horses are doing, who you are breeding to, and how you did at the sales. It is hard to find the time to sit down and send me this information, BUT PLEASE TRY.

Please take the time to fill this out for your racing stock. Please list all horses, even the ones I already have, so I can keep our stable updated. Use another page if you need more room.

HORSE'S NAME	DAM	DOB	Bred/Own/Both
_____	_____	_____	☐ ☐ ☐
_____	_____	_____	☐ ☐ ☐
_____	_____	_____	☐ ☐ ☐
_____	_____	_____	☐ ☐ ☐
_____	_____	_____	☐ ☐ ☐

Mail to: Bonnie Herring
NCTA
436 Sam Lowe Road
Siler City, NC 27344

Or send via E-mail at:
ncthoroughbred@gmail.com

PA-BRED REMINDERS

- **Early registration:**
Within 365 days of foaling
- **Yearling registration:**
Dec. 31 of yearling year
- **Stallion registration:**
Feb. 15 of year breeding
- **Broodmare domicile:**
Dec. 1 or 14 days after a public sale or entering state if being bred back to PA-sire

VISIT PABRED.COM

- Racing and breeding news
- PA-Bred entries/results
- Rules, regulations, forms

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Sovereignty continues legacy of Betty Moran

By Nikki Sherman

When Sovereignty stormed to victory in this year's \$5 million Kentucky Derby-G1, it was the culmination of over a century of breeding the best to the best. In a time when many of the nation's top racehorses are owned by partnerships that take up multiple lines in the program, his rich female lineage is composed of some of the most prominent single-entire breeders in history.

In 1924, Nellie Morse became the fourth of just six fillies to capture the Preakness Stakes during a sparkling career that saw her crowned American champion 3-year-old filly. Over a century later, she is the 10th dam of Sovereignty. Her daughter Nellie Flag was the very first homebred stakes winner for legendary Calumet Farm, and followed her mother in earning a championship as the top 2-year-old filly in 1934.

Nellie Flag was the dam of three stakes winners, led by champion Mar-Kell, as well as 1943 Kentucky Oaks heroine Nellie L. The latter produced Comely Nell, dam of Kentucky Derby and Belmont Stakes-G1 winner and champion 3-year-old Bold Forbes. Two years after Bold Forbes came his full sister Priceless Fame, both being by Irish Castle. Priceless Fame made history when sold for a broodmare record price of \$6 million in 1984 while in foal to Seattle Slew. In a unique twist, the buyer was Sheikh Mohammed's Darley Stud. Several generations later, the sheikh would breed Sovereignty under his Godolphin moniker.

A two-time winner at 3 of \$9,700, Priceless Fame was raced by breeders Eaton Farms and Red Bull Stable, retired for them as a broodmare, produced three foals, all stakes performers, including Grade/Group 1-winning juveniles Dunbeath and Saratoga Six (the latter, a son of Alydar, was a \$2.2 million sales yearling), and was sold for \$3.2 million, in foal to Alydar, to breeder Joseph Morrissey in 1983.

Morrissey bred one foal before nearly doubling his return on investment a year later. Priceless Fame's second Alydar offspring was the filly Milliardaire. She added to the Morrissey coffers when selling at Saratoga in 1985 to Mike G. Rutherford for \$2.7 million, marking the highest price for a yearling filly that year.

Milliardaire's most successful daughter was Rutherford's homebred multiple Grade 1 winner Lakeway (by Seattle Slew), who in turn produced \$1.5 million sales yearling and eventual stakes winner Sluice. It is through this female line that Sovereignty was conceived, and how the route to a Derby winner passed through one of the most elite breeders in Pennsylvania history.

Zayat Stables purchased Sluice's first foal for \$1.6 million at the 2006 Fasig-Tipton Saratoga Select Yearling Sale. Named Mushka, the daughter of Empire Maker showed promise as a juvenile with an electrifying 4½-length come-from-behind score in the \$200,000 Demoiselle Stakes-G2 at Aqueduct.

However, the excitement fizzled out when she did not win again for almost a year, finally taking an allowance on the turf at Keeneland in October.

One month later, Mushka was catalogued at Keeneland's mixed sale. It was there that Betty Moran discovered the tall, leggy filly and decided she absolutely needed the daughter of Seeking the Gold. She would not be deterred and held strong to purchase Mushka for \$2.4 million.

Moran owned a former dairy farm in Malvern, Pa., which she and her father converted into a gorgeous spot of equine heaven. The property was christened Brushwood Stable. Over the years, Moran fully embraced equestrian life in Chester County and became known as a generous philanthropist who was beloved by everyone who knew her.

Reiley McDonald of Eaton Sales advised Moran for over 30 years and after Sovereignty's Derby win, wrote in a letter to the editor of the Thoroughbred Daily News, "Mrs. Moran's breeding theory was to simply breed the best to the best, and

she rapidly developed one of the best small broodmare bands in U.S. history."

Among the horses bred by Moran were millionaires Hard Spun, High Yield, Master Command and Unique Bella, along with European champion Russian Rhythm. She was unfazed at spending money at the sales, as evidenced by Mushka, \$2.8 million Breeders' Cup winner Unrivaled Belle and \$3.1 million Eclipse Award winner Fiji (GB).

And she also kept a small racing division where Brushwood Stable campaigned Belmont Stakes winner Creme Fraiche, English Grand National winner Papillon and Arlington Million-G1 winner Kicken Kris. And notably, all three of those racehorses retired to live out their days on the quiet Chester County farm.

Mushka was sold as a racing/broodmare prospect and Moran was happy to keep the filly in training with original trainer Bill Mott. He knew the family well, having also trained Sluice. And of course he currently trains Sovereignty. Overall, Mott saddled Mushka for first or second place finishes in 12 of 19 career starts.

A dozen starts, all but two graded stakes, came under Brushwood Stable colors and included a victory in Saratoga's Glens Falls Handicap-G3, followed by a Grade 1 score in the \$500,000 Spinster Stakes at Keeneland and then a shot in the Breeders' Cup Ladies' Classic at Santa Anita, in which she rallied to finish second behind Life Is Sweet.

Upon her retirement to Moran's Pennsylvania farm, Mushka's foals were very well received at the sales, with Shadwell Farm shelling out \$1.65 million for her first foal, a son of Distorted Humor. It took \$1.2 million for Godolphin to nail down her very next foal, a daughter of Bernardini who was given the impressive name Crowned. While Crowned never made it to the races, she has produced three foals by Into Mischief, the most last being Sovereignty.

In the post-Derby press conference at Churchill Downs, Mott reflected, "It makes it fun because I trained the third dam (Sluice)... and we won a stakes with

continued on page 4

A few words from the Executive Secretary

Our first two PA-Bred Stakes ran on Father's Day, at Parx. The National Thoroughbred League, hosted by Dr J, helped pack the place making it a great day.

Stakes action saw Carmelina, bred by Lillith Boucher, go to the front, be pressed by the Wendy Kinnamon-bred Chapa, but have plenty left to edge away and win the Unique Bella Stakes by 2½ lengths. In the Page McKenney Handicap, the Melissa Houghton-bred Houghton Shuffle rallied four-wide to catch the SMD Ltd.-bred Kohler's and win by 1½ lengths. Congrats to all the connections.

I'm happy to announce that there will be no registration fee for the PA-Sired, PA-Bred Stallion Series in 2025. If your 2yo is PA-Sired PA-Bred, you will be automatically registered to run. The only exception will be the third and final leg of the 2024 Stallion Series to be run on Sept. 19 on PA Day at the Races, with stakes purses of \$100,000 for 3yos and 3yo fillies. These horses were already registered as 2yos in 2024. Any 3yos you wish to enter in these races not nominated in 2024 will have to be nominated by paying the \$5,000 stated late fee to the PHBA before the nomination date of Tuesday, Sept. 2.

A \$50,000 breeder bonus for horses that finish first, second and third in total points for the 2024 series will be paid after those races – \$25,000 for first, \$15,000 for second and \$10,000 for third.

If you are still using paper registrations, please make sure you forward a signed copy of the Code of Ethics, which is attached to the registration form. We will be transitioning to paperless this year. Wishing you good luck for the balance of 2025, and remember, PA is the only place to Breed and Race!!



— 2025 —

PENNSYLVANIA-BRED STAKES SCHEDULE



Sunday, June 15

\$100,000 PAGE MCKENNEY HANDICAP
\$100,000 UNIQUE BELLA STAKES

3 & up, 6 furlongs
3 & up, f&m, 6 furlongs



Friday, June 20

\$75,000 LYPHARD STAKES
\$75,000 ALPHABET SOUP HANDICAP

3 & up, f&m, 1 1/16 miles, turf
3 & up, 1 1/16 miles, turf



Monday, July 7

\$75,000 MALVERN ROSE STAKES

3YO fillies, 6 1/2 furlongs



Monday, July 21

\$75,000 HARD SPUN STAKES

3 & up, 1 mile 70 yards



Monday, July 28

\$75,000 PRINCESS OF SYLMAR STAKES

3 & up, f&m, 1 mile 70 yards



Friday, August 15

\$75,000 MARSHALL JENNEY HANDICAP
\$75,000 CROWD PLEASER STAKES

3 & up, 5 furlongs, turf
3YO, 1 1/16 miles, turf



Friday, Sept. 19

\$100,000 STORM CAT STAKES
\$100,000 PRINCE LUCKY STAKES
\$100,000 IMPLY STAKES

3 & up, 1 mile 70 yards
3YO PA-Sired, PA-Bred, 7 furlongs
3YO fillies, PA-Sired, PA-Bred, 7 furlongs



Wednesday, Oct. 22

\$75,000 JUMP START STAKES
\$75,000 DISCO CHICK STAKES

3 & up, PA-Sired PA-Breds, 7 furlongs
3 & up, f&m, PA-Sired PA-Breds, 7 furlongs



Wednesday, Nov. 26

\$100,000 PENNSYLVANIA NURSERY STAKES
\$100,000 SHAMROCK ROSE STAKES

2YO, 7 furlongs
2YO fillies, 6 furlongs

2YO PA-SIRED PA-BREDS:



Tuesday, Dec. 30

\$75,000 WAIT FOR IT STAKES
\$75,000 MISS BEHAVIOUR STAKES *Non-Black-Type

2YO PA-Sired PA-Breds, 6 furlongs
2YO fillies, PA-Sired PA-Breds, 6 furlongs



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her in Chicago. Then I was lucky enough to get Mushka... and we won the Spinster with her. Then Mushka, in turn, produced Crowned; and then Godolphin bought Crowned. It's really kind of a neat thing to

be able to train those families. It might be telling my age a little bit, but it really makes it pretty special."

Crowned passed away last year due to foaling complications, but she has forever

stamped her place in history as the dam of a Kentucky Derby winner and most recently, a Belmont Stakes victor. Betty Moran passed away in 2020. But she would be so incredibly proud to see her legacy continue on.

PA-Bred Fund Statistics: Top Earners

January 1 through February 28, 2025

LEADING EARNERS - TOTAL AWARDS

Breeder Name	Breeder	Stallion	Total	Breeder Name	Breeder	Stallion	Total
Warriors Reward	60,276	16,090	76,366	Equivine Farm LLC	31,927	0	31,927
A1A Racing	49,428	16,743	66,171	Social Inclusion Partners LLC	0	27,944	27,944
Blackstone Farm LLC	55,628	0	55,628	St. Omer's Farm	26,640	0	26,640
Uptowncharlybrown Stud LLC	31,246	23,190	54,435	Melissa Houghton	23,932	0	23,932
Glenn E. Brok LLC	35,123	4,360	39,483	Peter Giangiulio	23,152	0	23,152
Northview Stallion Station Inc	0	37,016	37,016	Arrowwood Farm Inc.	22,906	0	22,906
Chuck Russo	29,355	7,339	36,694	William P. Brady Estate	22,632	0	22,632
Joseph Imbesi	34,944	0	34,944	Godric LLC	16,752	0	16,752
Richard N. Miller	31,040	3,881	34,921	Cavanaugh Breen Farm LLC	15,680	0	15,680
Wyn Oaks Farm LLC	13,836	19,390	33,226	Maria M. Haire	13,414	550	13,964

LEADING STALLIONS

Fund Money includes Stallion Awards only

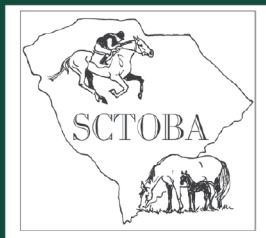
Stallion Name	Stallion Owner / Manager	No. of Races	Award Total	Stallion Name	Stallion Owner / Manager	No. of Races	Award Total
Social Inclusion	Social Inclusion Partners LLC	24	27,944	Jump Start	Northview Stallion Station Inc.	18	3,902
Uptowncharlybrown	Uptowncharlybrown Stud LLC	68	23,190	Emperor Tiberius	Richard N. Miller	9	3,881
Weigelia	Wyn Oaks Farm LLC	32	18,115	Flashback	Gary & Mary West Stables Inc.	7	3,360
Peace and Justice	A1A Racing	25	16,743	Talent Search	Glenn E. Brok LLC	8	3,079
Warrior's Reward	Warriors Reward	55	16,090	Pat On the Back	Harold Lerner LLC	4	2,881
Hoppertunity	Northview Stallion Station Inc.	56	16,054	Winchill	Pewter Stable	25	2,764
Uncle Lino	Northview Stallion Station Inc.	28	10,315	Golddigger's Boy	Luana J. Johnson	3	2,352
Il Villano	Chuck Russo	10	7,339	Wicked Strong	William J. Solomon VMD	7	2,296
Red Vine	DB Dojo LLC	15	6,204	Poseidon's Warrior	Swilcan Stables LLC	6	1,932
Medallist	Northview Stallion Station Inc.	8	5,983	Rimrod	Augustin Stable	3	1,596

LEADING HORSES

Fund Money includes: PA-Bred Races, Breeder and Stallion Awards and PA-Bred Owner-Bonus Payments.

Horse	Pedigree	Breeder	Races	Breeder Award	Stallion Award	Owner Bonus	Total
Socially Awkward*	Social Inclusion - Bluegrass Smile	Blackstone Farm LLC	3	27,552	6,888	16,080	50,520
Harp's Hot Corner*	Weigelia - Katarica Disco	St. Omer's Farm	2	26,640	6,660	12,000	45,300
La Cienega*	Peace and Justice - Blame Dixie	A1A Racing	3	18,592	4,648	13,280	36,520
Veeson*	Il Villano - Springingintherein	Chuck Russo	1	18,480	4,620	13,200	36,300
In Spades*	Peace and Justice - Lady Kierkegaard	A1A Racing	2	16,800	4,200	12,000	33,000
Renard*	Social Inclusion - Abets Abet	Joseph Imbesi	1	16,800	4,200	12,000	33,000
Sundria*	Red Vine - Deona	Richard N. Miller	3	14,527	3,632	9,088	27,247
Windsor Gold	Golden Lad - English Mum	Shooting Star Stable	2	10,934	0	15,620	26,554
Houghton Shuffle*	Medallist - Runs Like L	Melissa Houghton	2	14,400	3,600	7,200	25,200
Dropline*	Uncle Lino - Sour Lemon Drop	William P. Brady Estate	2	19,440	4,860	0	24,300
Regalpains	Hoppertunity - Royalaspen	Equivine Farm LLC	2	9,940	0	14,200	24,140
Big Boys Answer*	Uptowncharlybrown - Empires Answer	Cavanaugh Breen Farm LLC	2	15,680	3,920	4,000	23,600
Au Some Warrior*	Warrior's Reward - Au Fudge	Warriors Reward	3	11,648	2,912	8,320	22,880
Tara's Talent*	Talent Search - Graemy	Glenn E. Brok LLC	2	11,379	2,845	8,128	22,352
Sircharlybrown*	Uptowncharlybrown - Torchwood	Godric LLC	1	10,752	2,688	7,680	21,120
Social Lady*	Social Inclusion - Graemy	Glenn E Brok LLC	1	10,752	2,688	7,680	21,120
Maximus Angelicus	Maximus Mischief - Disco Rose	LC Racing LLC	1	8,400	0	12,000	20,400
Sharp Tones	Tonalist - A Dicey Dame	Lynn A. Ashby	1	8,400	0	12,000	20,400
Wouldja Couldja	Uncle Lino - Goodonehoney	Kasey K Racing Stable Trini LLC	1	8,400	0	12,000	20,400
Ninja Prize*	Warrior's Reward - Lemon Strudel	Kathleen Brady	2	10,192	2,548	7,280	20,020

*Denotes PA-sired



South Carolina

Thoroughbred Owners & Breeders Association

OFFICIAL NEWSLETTER

JULY/AUGUST 2025

Abaan wins Iroquois-G1

Abaan, trained and ridden by the South Carolina Thoroughbred Owners and Breeders member team of Kate and Bernie Dalton, captured the \$250,000 Calvin Houghland Iroquois-G1 May 10. This is one of only two Grade 1 stakes on the National Steeplechase spring schedule. Going 3 miles over National Hurdles, Abaan defeated the 2024 Eclipse Award champion Snap Decision. Carrying equal weights, Snap Decision was trying to win this race for the fourth time.

During his flat racing career, Abaan had a tendency to be head-strong, wanting to be in front or close to the lead from the beginning. As a

steeplechaser, he has learned how to relax early on. In the Iroquois, Abaan trailed the field before advancing to the leader, Snap Decision, approaching the last fence and went on to win by 1½ lengths.

While racing over jumps, Abaan has recorded five wins, four seconds and a third in 11 starts and has four stakes victories, the others being the Foxbrook Champion Hurdle, Carolina Cup and the Green Pastures. He's as earned \$331,710 as a steeplechaser.

A two-time stakes winner on the flat, including the Grade 3 W.L. McKnight at Gulfstream in 2022, he is owned by

Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners and Alex Daigneault Thoroughbreds.

On the same program, the Dalton team for the second year in a row won the Green Pastures Stakes, this year with China Beach. The 7-year-old took control of the race with a quarter of a mile to run and proved much the best, winning by 4 lengths. This was his third win in a row, and second stakes of the year following the Carolina Cup in March. He is owned by St Rita Racing.

SCTOBA member trainer Arch Kingsley won a maiden special weight race earlier on the program with SCTOBA member Pierre Manigault's Bonnebosq (Fr) by a neck.

South Carolina highlights on Oaks/Derby weekend

What a thrill it was for SC-bred apprentice jockey Taylor Kingsley at Churchill Downs on Kentucky Oaks Day! Taylor rode Joyous Song May 2 to a fifth-place finish for Kentucky Derby-winning trainer Bill Mott.

A graduate of Randy and Kala Rentz's breaking program, Macho Music, won the Pat Day Mile Stakes-G2 on Derby Day. He broke on top and never looked back, proving much the best while crossing the finish line 3½ lengths in

front. This was his second stakes victory in his last two starts, having captured the Ocala Breeders' Sales Sophomore Stakes in March. This win pushed his career earnings to \$501,857.

Drexel Hill finished second in the Kentucky Oaks, beaten only 2¼ lengths by Good Cheeer. This 3-year-old stakes-winning filly is a graduate of the Travis Durr Training Center.

While Kentucky Derby second-place finisher, Journalism, never has trained in South Carolina, one of his partnership

owners, Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners, who merged with Cot Campbell's Dogwood Stable in 2013, maintains its accounting office in Aiken.

Third place Kentucky Derby finisher Baeza is out of Puca, who called "Goree" Smith's Elloree Training Center home early in her career.

SCTOBA Vice-President Kip Elser has previously owned the first three dams that appear in the pedigree of Kentucky Derby participant Coal Battle.

Preakness Happenings

On the third Saturday in May, following his second-place finish in the Kentucky Derby, Journalism ran back in the 150th Preakness Stakes-G1 in Baltimore. In one of the

most thrilling races one will ever watch, he would not be denied, winning by a length after squeezing his way between horses and running down a 5-length leader inside the eight pole.

The day before, Eclipse Thoroughbred Partners (a member of the Journalism ownership group) and Bobby Flay's Candied won the Allaire duPont Distaff Stakes. Callie Ikwuezunma, daughter

of SCTOBA President Jack Sadler and Treasurer Susan Sadler, was asked by Aron Wellman, president of Eclipse Thoroughbred Partner, to lead Candied into the winner's circle. What an amazing experience for her!

Hollygrove, a graduate of the Travis Durr Training Center, finished third in the Miss Preakness Stakes-G3 that day.

South Carolina and the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic May sale

South Carolina Training Centers were active consignors at the Fasig-Tipton Midlantic 2-Year-Olds in Training Sale at the Maryland State Fairgrounds May 20. Due to inclement weather on previous days canceling a few training shows, the sale was cut to one day instead of two.

Marcus and Crystal Ryan sold five horses bringing a total of \$620,000. An Honor A. P. colt brought \$300,000 and a colt by Audible for \$100,000. A Beau

Liam filly went for \$120,000. Also sold under their Mason Springs banner was a Rock Your World filly and More Than Ready colt.

Cary Frommer sold an Honor A. P. filly for \$150,000 and a Mitole colt. Holly Hill Training Center LLC sold three for a total of \$204,500 – a Bolt d'Oro filly for \$130,000 and two colts by Uncle Lino.

Wes Carter had a busy day, selling 13 2-year-olds for an aggregate of \$384,000.

He sold fillies by Engage (3), Hit It a Bomb, Combatant, Fortune Ticket, Mo Town, Central Banker, Tiz the Law and Liam's Map. Carter also sold a colt by Tapit along with geldings by War of Will and Combatant.

James Layden consigned a filly by Mendelssohn and a colt by Maximus Mischief who together were hammered down for \$110,000.

South Carolina-trained winners

Horse	Training Center	Date	Track	Type of Race
Auction Kingdom	Aiken - Neil Morris	04/20/25	Morven Park	Handicap
Latta	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	04/21/25	Parx Racing	Allowance
Nature's Candy	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	04/21/25	Parx Racing	Allowance
Our Miss Crossbow	Aiken - Rebecca Hurt	04/23/25	Charles Town	Maiden Special Weight
Cat's Cave	McCutchen Training Ctr.	04/23/25	Keeneland	Allowance
Quiet Appeal	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	04/23/25	Penn National	Maiden Special Weight
Winnin'onweekends	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	04/23/25	Penn National	Allowance
Zadorsky	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	04/25/25	Keeneland	Allowance
Bobby M's Girl	Aiken - Bill Allyn	04/26/25	Aqueduct	Allowance
I'm Kidding	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	04/26/25	Aqueduct	Maiden Special Weight
Bustin Away	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	04/28/25	Finger Lakes	Allowance
Woodaz	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	04/29/25	Horseshoe Indianapolis	Maiden Special Weight
Cloud in the Wind	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/01/25	Penn National	Allowance
MACHO MUSIC	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/03/25	Churchill Downs	Pat Day Mile S-G2
Kevin Mac	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/03/25	Penn National	Maiden Special Weight
Diamond Essence	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/03/25	Penn National	Maiden Special Weight
Dataman	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/03/25	Laurel Park	Allowance
Post Time	Aiken - Cary Frommer	05/03/25	Laurel Park	Allowance
Tiz Sweet Emotion	Aiken - Cary Frommer	05/03/25	Belterra Park	Maiden Special Weight
Delicate	McCutchen Training Ctr.	05/03/25	Parx Racing	Allowance
Talented Man	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/04/25	Laurel Park	Allowance
Dynamic Actress	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/04/25	Tampa Bay	Starter Allowance
Scales of Gold	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/05/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
D's a Rock	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/05/25	Finger Lakes	Allowance
Apollonia Vitelli	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/06/25	Parx Racing	Starter Allowance
Nature's Candy	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/07/25	Penn National	Allowance
Graywing	Aiken - Legacy Stable	05/08/25	Aqueduct	Allowance
La Houligan	Aiken - Rebecca Hurt	05/08/25	Churchill Downs	Maiden Special Weight
River Dog	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/10/25	Monmouth Park	Allowance
Bonnebosq	Arch Kingsley	05/10/25	Iroquois	Maiden Special Weight
CHINA BEACH	Kate Dalton	05/10/25	Iroquois	Green Pastures S
ABAAN	Kate Dalton	05/10/25	Iroquois	Iroquois S-G1
King's River	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/10/25	Pimlico	Starter Handicap
Smuggler's Gold	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/11/25	Monmouth Park	Maiden Special Weight
Master Mule	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/12/25	Horseshoe Indianapolis	Maiden Special Weight
World Bank	Rentz Farm Training Ctr./ Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/12/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Banker Blayne	Arch Kinsley	05/12/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Swift Bank	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/12/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Annunciate	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/12/25	Finger Lakes	Maiden Special Weight
Scoop the Pot	Travis Durr Training Ctr./ Kate Dalton	05/17/25	Malvern	Maiden Special Weight
River Dog	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/17/25	Monmouth Park	Allowance
Far Mo Power	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/17/25	Parx Racing	Allowance
Hay Hay Harry	Travis Durr Training Ctr.	05/19/25	Finger Lakes	Allowance
Waitingforhelight	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/19/25	Presque Isle	Maiden Special Weight
King's Leap	Rentz Farm Training Ctr.	05/19/25	Finger Lakes	Allowance



VIRGINIA

VIRGINIA HORSEMEN INCENTIVE PROGRAMS MIRROR RISE OF RACING DATES & PURSE MONIES

The Virginia Thoroughbred Association (VTA) is riding a wave of momentum as the state's horse racing scene continues to grow, triggered by the success of Historical Horse Racing wagering handle at seven different Rosie's Gaming Emporiums spread across the Commonwealth. That success has led to 44 days of racing at Colonial Downs in 2025, up from 27 race days a year ago — including a new 3-day meet in March highlighted by the running of the Virginia Derby and Oaks as new qualifying races for the Kentucky Derby and Oaks. A \$5.8 million summer stakes calendar and record purse distribution of \$27 million highlight the summer campaign.

The VTA's incentive programs are growing in conjunction with purses and handle, and now is an ideal time for breeders, owners and trainers to discover the benefits of these initiatives. Whether it's the Virginia-Bred, Virginia-Certified or Virginia-Sired program, potential bonus monies await.

The Virginia-Bred program offers rewards to breeders, developers and owners of registered thoroughbreds foaled in Virginia. Breeders earn bonuses for finishing first, second or third in any open race in North America, outside of state-bred and state-sired races. Breeders' bonuses are earned for any top three finish at Colonial Downs and at NSA sanctioned meets. In 2024, bonus payouts turned out to be 36% of purses earned making this program's return on investment the only one of its kind in the country. In order to qualify, the foal's dam must reside in Virginia from September 1st of the year of conception until foaling the following year.

Amy Moore is a commercial breeder based in Northern Virginia and is a VTA past president. "Being a commercial breeder, I sell most of the foals I produce as weanlings or yearlings, and they might go anywhere to race. Lots of Virginia-breds run in New York or the mid-Atlantic, where they are eligible for purse enhancements, lucrative restricted races, and bonus money. But if my Virginia-bred foals run well against open company in Florida, or Kentucky, or California, or even



The colt/yearling field at Gracie Bloodstock in Middleburg, VA (Kiersten Wall photo)

in Canada, I earn breeder's incentive awards there as well."

"Many breeders' programs offer incentives for state-bred horses to run in their home state against other state-bred horses," added Moore. "Virginia has some great restricted-race opportunities at Colonial Downs, but it also rewards breeders who produce horses that can compete against anyone, anywhere. The national reach of Virginia's program is a real benefit to Virginia breeders."

Virginia-bred awards also extend to the developer and owner as well. The developer, who is the owner of the horse when it makes its first lifetime start, earns up to a 25% bonus for open race wins in six states — New York, New Jersey, Pennsylvania, Delaware, Maryland and Virginia — including NSA sanctioned meets in the Mid-Atlantic. Developer awards are not earned for out-of-state wins during Colonial's meet and only for open race wins at Colonial Downs.

Owners of Virginia-breds earn a 50% bonus on 1st thru 4th place winnings in open races at

the New Kent track. At Colonial Downs, Virginia-bred horses are also eligible to compete in Virginia-Restricted 2-Year-Old Stakes, Virginia-Restricted Handicaps, Virginia-Bred/Sired Stakes and Maryland/Virginia-Bred/Sired Stakes— courtesy of a new slate of events to be contested at both Colonial and in Maryland. In addition, Virginia-restricted overnight purses are 25% higher than open race purses (at Colonial).

"Virginia's award pool is large, and growing," said Moore. "Breeding thoroughbreds is expensive, and that bonus money certainly helps to pay the bills. I love the flexibility of Virginia's incentive program. There is no breed-back rule and no requirement to breed your mare to a regional stallion. If you buy a mare at public auction, she can qualify for the program if you bring her to Virginia within 15 days. I bought a nice mare at the Fasig-Tipton sale last November and brought her to Virginia, and she foaled a Virginia-bred Flightline colt this spring. I am excited to see what he can do in a few years' time!"

The formation of Virginia's Certified-Residency program back in 2016 helped stabilize the native industry after Colonial Downs' initial owner surrendered the track's racing license in early 2015. From 2016 - 2023, over \$16 million in bonus monies have been distributed to graduates of the residency program. In order to qualify, horses must reside at a Virginia registered farm for at least six consecutive months before December 31st of their two-year-old year. Developers then earn up to a 25% bonus for any open race win in the states noted in the Breeder's section above, and a 10% bonus for state-bred restricted races in those same states, with the exception of Virginia.

"It's an interesting program because Virginia is a great place to raise young horses," said Wayne Chatfield-Taylor who along with his wife Susie, have owned Morgan's Ford Farm in Front Royal, VA since 1979. "The way to qualify a baby for the program is to get them here (to Virginia) early for the minimum six month stay but even afterwards, they have to be boarded somewhere, so why not stay here. Virginia has a nice environment, has four seasons and has really good pasture. Developers will get bonus money once the horse starts racing and the horses will reap the benefits of good farmland. It's a win-win."

Owners should note that Virginia-Certified horses are eligible to compete in Virginia-Restricted races at Colonial — with Virginia-Bred & Virginia-Sired horses. The Virginia-Restricted summer lineup includes two \$100,000 freshmen stakes and four \$100,000 Handicap races.

The Virginia-Sired program is open to thoroughbreds conceived in Virginia, sired by a Virginia-registered stallion, and foaled out of state. Developer bonuses mirror those noted in the Breeders and Certified program sections. Owners earn a 50% bonus on 1st thru 4th purses in open races at Colonial and experience the same overnight and stakes purse bumps as noted in the Breeders section.

"The VTA is excited to see this kind of growth and momentum in the industry as challenges arise across the nation," said VTA President Turner Kobayashi. "The Certified program and the Owner and Breeder purse bonus awards have attracted more mares producing more foals and more horses racing in the state



Big Lick Farm Manager Alex Austin pictured with a Virginia-certified dark bay colt out of Walks Like a Lady at their Charlottesville, VA farm (Kiersten Wall).

and locally. We hosted the Virginia Derby in March this year as a prep race for the Kentucky Derby. We continue to look at ways to innovate and improve to attract more owners, breeders and fans to experience the thrill that thoroughbred horse racing brings."

COLONIAL DOWNS BARN AREA OPENS & TRAINING BEGINS; 41-DAY SUMMER MEET SET TO KICK OFF JULY 9

The Colonial Downs stable area opened June 23rd and training began two days later as preparations continue for a ten-week thoroughbred meet in New Kent — the longest in years — which begins July 9 and continues thru September 13. A four-day race week will be in place this meet with cards scheduled every Wednesday thru Saturday at 12:30 except Fridays when a twilight program begins at 4 PM. Steeplechase races will be sprinkled in on seven different Thursdays beginning at 10:45 AM — on July 10, 17 & 31, August 7 & 21, and September 4 & 11. A trio of

jump events will be carded before the flat portion begins at 12:30 PM. On-track wagering will be offered on the steeplechase events.

Given the length of the meet, attractive daily purse offering, enhanced \$5.8 million stakes schedule, and a reinvigorated partnership with neighboring Maryland, the barn area is expected to be full. Mike Trombetta, 2024's leading trainer, and Ben Curtis, last year's top jockey, are returning to defend their respective titles where they will face a mix of returning conditioners and jockeys as well as plenty of new faces.

A new \$1.9 million dormitory will debut which provides additional space for grooms — which in turn has helped attract more trainers. Additional investments were made in turf course irrigation equipment, plus 5,000 cubic yards of material were applied to the dirt track. Colonial also hired Ron Smith, who has 50 years of experience working on tracks, to serve as a seasonal dirt track superintendent to complement Director of Track Operations Leif Dickenson.

From a racing standpoint, a minimum of eight races are expected to be carded on weekdays and a minimum of nine on Saturdays. Stakes races will be carded every Saturday during the meet including six total for Maryland/Virginia-bred/sired horses at \$125,000 each, six \$100,000 stakes/handicaps for Virginia-restricted horses, and four \$125,000 stakes for Virginia-bred/sired horses. Any weather-related cancellations will be made up on Sunday afternoon of that same week.



The Secretariat Turf Course at Colonial Downs, which hosts 80% of the races in New Kent, is a big attraction for trainers (VEA photo).

VIRGINIA THOROUGHBRED ASSOCIATION

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For more information on the Virginia Breeders Fund or Virginia Stakes Program, please contact the VTA.

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West Virginia

THOROUGHBRED BREEDERS ASSOCIATION

Newsletter

July/August 2025

Tim Grams: Cowboy up to 1,000 wins

By Jeff Gilleas

Saturday night, May 10, proved to be a double whammy in the milestone department for Grams Racing Stable and trainer Tim Grams. Minutes after Judy and Tim's undefeated colt Moonlit Notion coasted home in the \$75,000 Coin Collector Stakes, a select group reformed in the winner's circle to congratulate Tim on his 1000th career victory.

It's been a long road for the calloused hands conditioner, who once broke horses for a living, to wrestling steeds in the starting gate, to earning high praise as a rough-and-ready outrider. Hard work has paid handsome dividends for the man who once said that money isn't the driving force behind his success.

These days, past performance lines for the 61-year old Boonsboro, Md., native's horses are simply defined in a word – consistency. Horseplayers, fans and most notably track announcer Paul Espinosa Jr. will never forget April 20, 2019, as a day that will forever be celebrated.

It was approximately 5:43 in the evening when the Gramses' modestly-bred Runnin'toluvya made history by capturing the



COADY MEDIA (2)

\$1 million Charles Town Classic-G2. Though the temperamental gray son of West Virginia stallion Fiber Sonde entered the race on an eight-race win streak, odds of 9-1 established the caliber of the competition he stacked up against. The grandstand apron was standing room only, as those in attendance endeavored to get a glimpse of racing's spirit of elitism.

One minute and 50-plus seconds later it was rider Oscar Flores and his mount, that combined for an "Oscar" winning presentation.

As the field was sent away to its historic beginning, Runnin'toluvya immediately assumed a forward position. The hometown hero's familiarity with the tight Charles Town turns was a tactical bonus, but it was the bond of trust between a jockey and horse that proved magical. Oscar Flores had developed the ability to physically communicate with his independent companion using a soft touch and graduated coaxing.

In deep stretch, Paul Espinosa transitioned from announcer to enthusiast, as his voice exclaimed history is being made, as the West Virginia-bred wins the Charles Town Classic. Maybe the dream was ripe for harvest, by our blue-collar champion.

For Tim and Judy Grams it was a life changing experience.

Like most sport unicorns, Runnin'toluvya found it difficult to maintain his iconic persona, and the \$1.1 million-earner eventually settled for a life of rest and relaxation at Grams Farm. Benchmark Beau Ridge Farm sire Fiber Sonde continued to thrill us with runners like Muad'dib, Late Night Pow Wow, Penguin Power, Hidden Canyon, No Change, Dr. Feelgood, Bridging the Gap, Bullets Fever, and for the Gramses Fancy Concho, Loving Touch and Moonlit Song, the latter dam of Moonlit Notion.

I caught up with Tim as he accompanied a band of his well manicured horses heading for an early morning canter at the training track.

"I prefer to train my young horses and veterans at the small track because they can jog and usually it's calm there. During COVID and an EPA construction project, the small track was closed, and it really affected my ability to apply my conditioning methods," he said.

Journeymen Larry Reynolds and Gerald Almodovar, alongside Judy, were forced to handle the bulk of Monday's galloping duties, as one rider failed to show because of car issues.

"This ain't the same rugged game we grew-up in. Nowadays, money isn't always the prime incentive for a dependable worker. If you raise your voice or cast a harsh glance towards an employee, he'll be rubbing horses for your neighbor in the morning," said the trainer.

Peering down the shedrow, Tim's crew appeared knowledgeable and complementary. All-purpose first-string play caller, Levi Pearson, has been with Grams since 2017, while former jockey turned valet/hot walker Emeterio Rozas is rumored to been around so long he might have saddled Ulysses S. Grant's horse in the Civil War.

When the last set cooled out, Tim took up residence behind his desk and the subject returned to Runnin'toluvya. His manner of speech intensified.

It was as if he stared into my soul, one career indebted horseman to another. "Winning the Grade 2 Charles Town Classic, with a horse we raised from a weanling, broke at our farm, and addressed his every tantrum, is hard to put into words. (Tim momentarily paused to rub his eyes) it was the greatest feeling I've ever experienced in this business."

The Gramses aren't new to this game, but definitely true to it.

"I still have a lot of family and friends in nearby Boonsboro," said Tim, "but I've made my living in West Virginia and I'll spend my money here. This is home."

On the subject of unbeaten Moonlit Notion, Tim is quick to praise jockey Larry Reynolds.

"Larry and I are cut from the same cloth. We believe in being punctual, we like taking our time with young horses, and most of all we genuinely communicate. I'm not sure how good Moonlit Notion can be. His pedigree is skilled. Larry feels he still possesses a gear we haven't seen yet."

Tim gave me a look that said let's wrap this up. With two farms, 22 broodmares, one stallion (Dark Canyon) and 35 horses at the track, our time just expired.

If the West Virginia Division of Tourism or Thoroughbred Development Program need a state slogan, accompanied by a face to promote horse racing, they should look no further than Barn 16 at Charles Town.

My personal favorite: "All the risk, all the reward."

Tim and his wife Judy didn't promulgate the following ideas, but have embraced every component of the Development Fund, 10-10-10 Program and agricultural incentives to amass one of the most powerful stables at Charles Town, comprised primarily of local talent.

West Virginia Thoroughbred Breeders Association

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Chasing

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Steeplechase Foundation



The wit and wisdom of one of steeplechasing's greatest riders

By Betsy Burke Parker

Son of two trainers and father to another, Dooley Adams was seven-time champion jockey, a legend among legends at a time when jump racing played to packed houses at the hunt meets and at the major tracks both.

His amazing story starts in New England but picks up a few years later on a dusty Mexican backstretch, later shifting to a starring role as New York racing's handicap hurdle king. Follow him over-water to England's storied Aintree racecourse and through almost a decade at the top of American jump racing. After a few years of "giving back" to the sport as a patrol judge, Adams trained horses off the farm in his beloved Southern Pines.

In the 1980s and '90s, Adams continued to leave an indelible mark on the sport, in his trademark gentle manner sharing career-changing nuggets of knowledge with young riders, young trainers and young horses.

The champion rider called "The Iceman" by NSA yearbook writers even left this world in a quietly remarkable way, easing from life to death, son Mike maintains, "exactly how most people hearing how dad died is how they hope to go, too."

1927 – Frank David Adams is born to Frank Michael Adams and Clara E. Adams in Port Chester, New York.

Frank Adams is manager and huntsman for the old Watertown Hunt in Connecticut.

1930s – Frank Adams moves his family west to tiny Alpine, California, a village in the mountains just east of San Diego. Frank had tuberculosis, and for health purposes



From the 1956 "Steeplechasing in America." Clara and Frank Adams with their son Dooley. *Freudy photo / NSA Archives*

he moved his family from New York to San Diego in the late 1930s for softer weather and better air. Clara Adams began training racehorses, one of the first women to saddle runners, starting at Agua Caliente in Tijuana just across the Mexican border.

At the time, a few East-coast trainers would ship cross-country to winter at the track that offered hurdle racing and flat at a dazzling Pacific coast racecourse.

1930s – Grooms in Frank and Clara Adams' shedrow give their young son, Frank David, the nickname "Dooley", after a popular showtune of the era, "Mister Dooley". The nickname sticks; everybody, including his parents, calls him Dooley from then on.

1938 – A raw-boned gray colt is born in southern California to the Great Jaz mare, Jo Jean, sired by Iron Crown (grandson of legendary sire of sires, The Tetrarch.) Refugio is discovered, a thin and scrawny 3-year-old, by Frank Michael Adams while

commuting from his home near San Diego to Agua Caliente.

The Adams family bought the horse for \$300 – not much, even back then. They poured the feed to him, and young Dooley taught the horse to jump.

It was Refugio that provided Dooley Adams with his first flat win in 1941 at age 14, and his first jump win – both at Agua Caliente

1942 – Dooley Adams obtains a trainer's license while not yet 16. A horse he saddled, Facilus, for years holds the Agua Caliente track record for 1 ¾ miles. That same year, Dooley's older sister Joan makes headlines by winning a publicity match race aboard Refugio. Joan defeats Hollywood stunt girl, Marjorie Manning, who rode the imported French horse, Notley.

1943 – The Adams family returns to the East coast to support Dooley Adams' budding steeplechase career. They start out based in New York; Dooley takes out his jock's license at age 16.

1946 – Dooley Adams wins his first rider title, sharing the crown with John Magee – each with 28 victories. That year, Adams and Refugio win the Chevy Chase Handicap and are third in the American Grand National, qualifying for the English Grand National.

Frank Adams takes a sporting chance, sending Dooley and Refugio by freight ship to England for the 1947 race at Aintree. Major D.L. Sweet-Escott trains the horse on the Dover coast, sometimes galloping on the beach and schooling over stacks of straw bales to prepare for the grueling 4-mile 'chase.

March 29, 1947 – Refugio is one of 57 starters in the English Grand National.

British pundits predict the American jockey and California-bred horse won't get past the first obstacle.

"They were sure that (the then-new-fangled) 'forward seat' would be impractical and dangerous on the treacherous Aintree course," Adams told a turf journal. "To skilled Britishers, who knew every inch of the terrain, it proved tough enough. Forty of the 57 didn't finish that day."

Refugio finishes seventh of just 17 finishers. Adams later told American writer Peter Winants that his style actually worked to his advantage. "I always rode fairly short (stirrups) and didn't change things for the National."

The winner, Irish horse Caughoo, pulls off a stunner at 200-1. The horse had cost his owner just \$200 to purchase, so, together with the \$300 Refugio, two of the finishers in the 1947 Grand National could have been bought for \$500.

Refugio returns to the States, winning his final start, a hurdle stake at Pimlico, before retiring to Refugio Farm in Southern Pines. The horse competes in hunter trials and becomes something of a local celebrity. He died of an apparent aneurysm in his mid-20s giving a lead to a green hunter Dooley Adams was training.

Dooley Adams told Winants that the horse was buried at Refugio Farm, later joined by Frank and Clara Adams. "I'll be there one day, too," Adams said in a 1999 interview.

1947 – Dooley Adams is second-leading jockey, with 23 wins.

1948 – Second-leading jockey again, with 20 wins; Daniel Marzani is champ with 24 wins.

1949 – Adams wins his second title with 23 wins from 102 rides

1950 – Turfwriter O'Neil Sevier, often a harsh critic of jockeys – equally scathing for flat and jump riders, writes that champion Dooley Adams is one of the greatest reinsmen, ever.

"If the stranglers on the flats saved half the ground in their races that Adams saves in those jumps, we'd have Arcaros at every racetrack," Sevier writes.

Before his death that same year, Sevier had quoted Adams on his feelings about the link between jump racing and flat racing. "Flat racing," Adams told the turf scribe, must be "aware of the debt it owes steeplechasing. Back in those dark days before World War I, when Governor Hughes



Adams with Sanford Stud Farm's Fulton in a hurdle handicap at Aqueduct in 1955.

©Morgan/NSA

had made flat racing a memory, the (flat) sport was almost wiped out in this country. The spark of encouragement so necessary to breeders and horsemen to keep it alive was supplied by steeplechase and hunt meetings.

"Interest and enthusiasm were maintained at a time when a lack of it would have been the end of racing.

"Horsemen, especially the old-timers, know and remember the part that the jumpers played in this critical period."

1951 – Carolina Cup winner Gift of Gold is one of Adams' then-record 35 victories to kick off his 1951 championship campaign. Southern Pines neighbor Mickey Walsh trains the English import owned by his wife.

Son Frank Michael -- Mike -- Adams is born.

1952 – Gift of Gold wins the Carolina Cup again, one of Adams' 23 wins that championship year.

1953 – Year-end champion with 22 winners from 120 rides.

1954 – Year-end champion with 38 winners from 125 rides.

July 8, 1955 – New York Times turfwriter Michael Strauss calls Adams a "sterling steerer" after he conjures a win with Sanford Stud Farm's Fulton in a hurdle handicap, feature on an afternoon card at Aqueduct. It's one of Adams' 31 victories that year, his last championship season.

1956 – Dooley Adams retires from racing at age 29 after winning the Temple Gwathmey that year with Ancestor.

He accumulated a record 301 wins over jumps, plus 36 on the flat, and seven titles.

Son Mike Adams says his father opted for early retirement came because he "took a few falls, and those were the days they wore silk caps, not skull caps. You couldn't do that too many times."

After he retires from riding, Dooley works as a New York racing patrol judge for a few

years. "Dad had always been pretty critical of race officiating," Mike says. "This is how he said he wanted to give back to the sport and bring it up a notch. He was always about being fair."

1964 – Eventual Hall of Fame rider Joe Aitcheson Jr. surpasses Dooley Adams' longtime single-season win record (38 in 1954) with 40 victories that year.

Aitcheson later told the Chronicle of the Horse that Adams was "a very, very intelligent rider. His mind was so good that he would plan things I couldn't even calculate. When I broke his record, he wrote me a letter that said, 'Joe, records were meant to be broken. Congratulations.' That was a very classy thing to do."

1966 – Two of the horses Adams rode extensively – champions Neji and Elkrige, are inducted into Racing's Hall of Fame. Another, Oedipus, is inducted in 1978. Adams once called Elkrige "the finest horse" he ever rode.

Elkrige made 123 starts over 11 seasons without ever setting foot at a hunt meet, symbolic of Adams' preponderance of wins at the major tracks since most of the nation's top stakes races were conducted at flat tracks around the northeast in those days.

1970 – Dooley Adams is inducted into the National Museum of Racing Hall of Fame.

November 9, 1997 – Arch Kingsley Jr. gets the call on a quirky 4-year-old California-bred trainer Dooley Adams had picked up for the shipping fee. Kingsley steers Al Skywalker to his maiden hurdle victory, launching an eight-year, multiple grade 1-winning career including the 2001 and 2003 Carolina Cups.

Kingsley recalls he was pleased to get the ride from a trainer whose race riding career he knew was one to emulate. "Dooley was such a character, very unassuming and very humble," Kingsley says. "Sure, he was pretty worn down by the sands of time when I rode Al Skywalker for him, but I totally looked up to him, because he was such a major player in this game.

"We really hit it off, and I liked it that he was full of old wisdom. I quote him all the time, and one of his favorite sayings really stuck with me.

"He'd say, 'all a rider can do is get a horse beat. Good riders just get less horses beat than bad riders.'

"Dooley downplayed his own talents and accomplishments. He credited the horses, a quiet man of few words."

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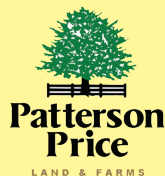
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— Looking Back —

10 years ago

■ American Pharoah overcame the opposition, and a massive late afternoon storm, to win the Preakness in a romp – and finished off the Triple Crown in the Belmont Stakes after 37 years of frustration. “The Zayat Stables homebred never wavered, never stuttered, never gasped,” wrote Sean Clancy of the Bob Baffert-trained, Victor Espinoza ridden colt after the Belmont.

“He’s a very smart horse, a very intelligent horse,” said Baffert after the Preakness. “He’s just all class. . .”

■ For the first time in its 40-year history, a horse topped \$1 million at a Fasig-Tipton Midlantic sale in Timonium, Md. A Smart Strike filly, consigned by Eddie Woods and purchased by agent Ben McElroy, reached \$1.25 million to lead record figures for gross (\$22,659,000 from 255 horses sold) and average (\$88,859 average).

The filly named Garnet placed twice in five starts, earning \$16,210. She later sold for \$500,000, then \$75,000, as a broodmare, and is the dam of two stakes horses, one a graded winner. Two graduates who sold for much less became Grade 1 winners – millionaire Discreet Lover and Hunter O’Riley, purchased for \$10,000 and \$50,000, respectively.



■ Down Town Allen, pulled up while seeking her third consecutive win in the Original Gold Stakes the previous month, lost her fight when euthanized due to her injuries. The only West Virginia-bred filly or mare to earn more than \$1 million, the 25-time winner was a Charles Town superstar. Bred, owned and trained by John A. Casey, the 8-year-old daughter of Windsor Castle had won 14 consecutive starts at the track, 12 in stakes company, leading into her final race.

■ Force the Pass outran 10 rivals to win Penn National’s first graded stakes in 26 years, the \$500,000 Penn Mile. The turf stakes for 3-year-olds needed just two runnings before it was awarded Grade 3 status.

Penn National’s Pennsylvania Governor’s Cup Stakes had been a Grade 3 from 1973-89, and was won, after losing its grade, by the likes of Breeders’ Cup winners Da Hoss and Chamberlain Bridge.

75 years ago

■ Pimlico’s management had given up all thought of transferring the activities of the Maryland Jockey Club to Laurel and would rebuild at the present Pimlico plant in Baltimore. There had been persistent rumors that Pimlico still wanted to move to Laurel, but those were quashed in a letter from Maryland Jockey Club president Harry A. Parr III to the Maryland Racing Commission. Among the factors he noted was it “justified wishes of the people of Baltimore to retain the traditional racing which has had its home at Pimlico for 80 years.”

There was much speculation as to what would be recommended in the way of rebuilding and modernizing Pimlico.

■ H. Guy Bedwell, dean of Maryland Thoroughbred trainers, “announced plans to dispose of his turf holdings and return to California, whence he came to Maryland 38 years ago.”

The 75-year-old horseman was to sell his 106-acre Yarrow Brae breeding farm near Laurel, along with the stallions Sun Egret and Undulator, and several broodmares.

Known as “Hard Guy” Bedwell, he was “outspoken and always ready to stand back of what he says . . . and has been a leader among horsemen.” One of his many accomplishments was sending out the maiden Sir Barton to win the 1919 Kentucky Derby over stablemate Billy Kelly, who finished second.

■ Elkridge, the iron horse of racing as well as the leading money-winning steeplechaser in the world, passed the \$200,000 mark in earnings. In his 10th season of competition, the 12-year-old son of Mate and Best by Test owned by Kent Miller “established a record that will probably stand for many years to come.” The Maryland-bred most recently won Delaware Park’s Georgetown Steeplechase.

In 1948 Elkridge shattered Jolly Roger’s money-winning mark of \$143,240 that had stood for 18 years.

Elkridge retired the next year with earnings in excess of \$230,000. Neji broke the earnings record seven years later.

50 years ago

■ Helen Polinger got her first stakes wins as an owner when 4-year-old jumper Jezabell's Man took the Tom Roby and Indian River handicaps at Delaware Park to establish himself as one of the nation's best steeplechasers.

Trained by farm manager Monti "Sonny" Sims, Jezabell's Man came into Polinger's possession as an unraced 3-year-old. The estranged wife of Maryland Racing Commission member Milton Polinger purchased him from her husband. "Milton sold him to me to make up for the bad advice he had given me on another horse," she said. Having the pick of four or five horses, she settled on the Virginia-bred son of *Prince Taj and *Jezabell III and added: "I don't know exactly why except that he was big, looked like he might make a jumper, and Milton priced him cheaper than most of the others."

The Polingers' vast operation included more than 200 horses over three farms in Montgomery and Howard counties, with 36 foals bred to race on the flat. But Helen noted: "I'm totally dedicated to steeplechasing."

Polinger expanded her stable a short time later. Her best runner, Grade 1-winning millionaire The Very One, was bought as a 2-year-old at the 1977 Timonium sale.

■ A four-person syndicate – Allaire duPont, E.P. Taylor, Richard Stokes and Gordon Ramm – brought Bold Ruler's stakes-winning son King Emperor back from Ireland to stand at duPont's Woodstock Farm in Chesapeake City, Md. The 9-year-old stallion, with two crops of racing age, was a huge attraction due to "a great racing record, plus an extraordinary bottom line."

King Emperor stood in Maryland for 11 years before his death in 1987. Sire of 20 stakes winners, six while in Ireland, he was a better broodmare sire, his daughters producing the likes of millionaires Simply Majestic and Zoman. A granddaughter, Majesty's Crown, was the dam of Eclipse Award-winning sprinter Smoke Glacken.

■ Larry MacPhail's 376-acre Glenangus Farm sold at public auction for \$1.23 million to James T. Dresher. The once nearly 1,000-acre property near Bel Air, Md., was purchased by MacPhail in the early 1940s and became known as one of the most prolific stud farms in the state. When MacPhail retired as an owner and breeder in 1967, he declared: "During the past 22 years more than 100 stakes class horses, which were bred, raised, sold or syndicated by Glenangus, or raced by me, brought when sold, or won when raced, more than 40 million dollars."

A lawyer, baseball executive (a Baseball Hall of Fame inductee) and war veteran, MacPhail was a highly contentious figure in the Thoroughbred industry. He died four months after the sale of the farm at the age of 85. Dresher, recently named to the board of The Maryland Jockey Club, breeds and races under the Glenangus banner.

■ Timonium's 42-day race meet, from late July through early September, would offer its first stakes races. Four would be worth a combined \$85,000 in added money. "We've had over 1,900 stall applications," said general manager Max Mosner, "including ones from Delp, Dutrow, Leatherbury, Tammaro and Forbes."

■ "Stuart S. Janney Jr. is a director and past president of the Maryland Horse Breeders Association. Because of his close affiliation with the organization which publishes this magazine, it seems proper that editorial mention should be made of his great filly Ruffian," wrote Snowden Carter following the champion filly's death.

"The best that can be said is that Ruffian left her owners, Mr. and Mrs. Janney, with a chest full of memories. They will, in the years to come, raise and breed many horses. None will ever equal Ruffian. Unlucky, of course, to lose their champion, the Janneys are, nevertheless, among the world's luckiest persons ever to have had her in the first place."

25 years ago

■ The Maryland General Assembly authorized the state Racing Commission to determine whether a race track license should be issued in Allegany County.

Two parties were interested: William Rickman Jr., president and co-owner of Delaware Park, who for a decade tried to gain a foothold in Maryland, his home state; and Joe De Francis, president and co-owner of Pimlico and Laurel racecourses.

"It's not like we're bringing something to Western Maryland that's never been here," says Del. Casper Taylor Jr. (D-Allegany), the House Speaker. "We know [horse racing] was here and was very successful."

By year's end, De Francis changed course to pursue two off-track-betting parlors. Rickman's Maryland involvement was as owner of the Ocean Downs harness track.

■ Richter Scale romped to a track record-setting victory in the 11th Grade 1 Frank J. De Francis Memorial Dash, getting 6 furlongs in 1:07.95, the fastest time in Laurel Park's 89 years of existence. Mary Jo Lohmeier trained for Richard and Nancy Easter and Nathan Fox.

Richter Scale's record still stands today.

■ Pleasant Colony, Virginia-bred winner of the 1981 Kentucky Derby and Preakness Stakes and a longtime leading sire, was pensioned in his home state following a brief stay at the Kentucky Horse Park. The 22-year-old son of His Majesty had been

retired from stud duty at Lane's End Farm in Kentucky in April. In May, he moved to Blue Ridge Farm near Upperville, Va.

■ Dr. Richard and Gale Reveley had the distinction of campaigning possibly the tallest Thoroughbred in training – 18.2-hand homebred S W Clarence. A winner of 14 of 25 starts and \$319,763, the Pennsylvania-bred had most recently recorded his sixth stakes win in Penn National's Lyphard Handicap.

"When we go to the paddock and see people looking at him, you can hear them say, 'Mother of God, look at this thing!' He just towers over other horses," said Dr. Reveley. "It's a good thing he's nice, because there's no way you could control him if he didn't want you to."

— Past Time —



Measuring Up, Way Up

Officials (who we'll assume are relatively average height) take a break while inspecting one of the natural brush jumps on the Foxcatcher National Cup's course at Fair Hill in 1937, the Maryland fixture's fourth running. Soldier's Fate won the 3-mile race, which included 19 fences, for owner Campbell Weir, trainer James E. Ryan and jockey J.S. Harrison. Ryan won all four races on the card, two on the flat and two over brush. Though the Foxcatcher course was discontinued after 1957, Fair Hill hosted racing through 2019 when a major reconstruction of the turf course was undertaken by property owner the Maryland Department of Natural Resources. The course drew praise when used for training this spring and summer, with work underway to return the races to the calendar. Just don't expect to see fences like this one.



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STAKES SCHEDULE

Saturday, July 12, 2025

\$125,000 Star De Naskra Stakes **MD/VABred or Sired**
Three Year Olds, 7 fur.

\$125,000 Miss Disco Stakes **MD/VABred or Sired**
Fillies, Three Year Olds, 7 fur.

Friday, July 18, 2025

\$125,000 Punch Line Stakes **VABred/Sired**
Three Year Olds and Upward, 5½ fur.(Turf)

\$125,000 Edward P. Evans Stakes **VABred/Sired**
Three Year Olds and Upward, 1¼ mi.(Turf)

Saturday, July 19, 2025

\$125,000 Glenn Petty **VABred/Sired**
Fillies And Mares Three Year Olds and Upward, 5½ fur.(Turf)

\$125,000 Brookmeade Stakes **VABred/Sired**
Fillies And Mares Three Year Olds and Upward, 1¼ mi.(Turf)

Saturday, July 26, 2025

\$100,000 Love Sign
Fillies And Mares Three Year Olds and Upward, 6 fur.

\$100,000 Reigh Count
Three Year Olds and Upward, 7 fur.

Saturday, August 2, 2025

\$100,000 Hickory Tree **Virginia Restricted**
(Plus \$50,000 for Virginia Bred &or Sired)
Two Year Olds 5½ fur.

\$100,000 Keswick **Virginia Restricted**
(Plus \$50,000 for Virginia Bred &or Sired)
Fillies Two Year Olds, 5½ fur.

Thursday, August 7, 2025

\$100,000 Randolph D. Rouse Stakes
Fillies And Mares Four Year Olds and Upward, 2¼ mi.(hurdle)

Saturday, August 9, 2025

\$100,000 Petramalo Mile
Three Year Olds, 1 mi.

\$100,000 Tyson Gilpin
Fillies Three Year Olds, 7 fur.

\$500,000 Secretariat- Grade II
Three Year Olds, 1 mi. (Turf)

\$150,000 Van Clief Stakes- Listed
Three Year Olds and Upward, 5½ fur.(Turf)

\$150,000 Andy Guest Stakes
Fillies And Mares Three Year Olds and Upward, 5½ fur. (Turf)

\$500,000 The Beverly D.- Grade II
Fillies And Mares Three Year Olds and Upward, 1¼ mi.(Turf)

\$1,000,000 Arlington Million- Grade I
Three Year Olds and Upward, 1¼ mi.(Turf)

Saturday, August 16, 2025

\$125,000 Find **MD/VABred or Sired**
Three Year Olds and Upward, 1¼ mi.(Turf)

\$125,000 The All Brandy **MD/VABred or Sired**
Fillies And Mares Three Year Olds and Upward, 1¼ mi. (Turf)

Saturday, August 23, 2025

\$125,000 Jamestown Stakes **MD/VABred or Sired**
Two Year Olds 5½ fur.(Turf)

\$125,000 Dolley Madison **MD/VABred or Sired**
Fillies Two Year Olds, 5½ fur.(Turf)

Saturday, August 30, 2025

\$100,000 Meadow Stable Handicap **Virginia Restricted**
(Plus \$50,000 for Virginia Bred &or Sired)
Three Year Olds and Upward, 5½ fur.(Turf)

\$100,000 Camptown Handicap **Virginia Restricted**
(Plus \$50,000 for Virginia Bred &or Sired)
Fillies And Mares Three Year Olds and Upward, 5½ fur.(Turf)

Thursday, September 4, 2025

\$100,000 Life's Illusion Hurdle Stakes
Fillies And Mares Four Year Olds and Upward, 2¼ mi.)

Saturday, September 6, 2025

\$125,000 Exacta Systems Rosie's Stakes
Two Year Olds, 5½ fur.(Turf)

\$150,000 Da Hoss Stakes
Three Year Olds and Upward, 5½ fur.(Turf)

\$125,000 Kitten's Joy Stakes
Two Year Olds, 1¼ mi.(Turf)

\$500,000 Old Dominion Derby- Grade III
Three Year Olds, 1¼ mi. (Turf)

\$250,000 Old Dominion Oaks- Listed
Fillies Three Year Olds, 1¼ mi (Turf)

\$150,000 Colonial Cup
Three Year Olds and Upward, 1½ mi. (turf)

Saturday, September 13, 2025

\$100,000 Bert Allen Handicap **Virginia Restricted**
(Plus \$50,000 for Virginia Bred &or Sired)
Three Year Olds and Upward, 1¼ fur.(Turf)

\$100,000 Nellie Mae Cox Handicap **Virginia Restricted**
(Plus \$50,000 for Virginia Bred &or Sired)
Fillies And Mares Three Year Olds and Upward, 1¼ fur.(Turf) 2



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